

Frontispiece :

A Pandit housewife repairing the *chulah* (fireplace) in her kitchen.

FAMILY AND KINSHIP

A STUDY OF THE PANDITS OF RURAL KASHMIR

by

T. N. MADAN

With a Foreword by

J. A. BARNES



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To
DEREK FREEMAN
in
Friendship and Gratitude

Foreword

INDIA is a vast and complex country with a rich treasure of records from a literate past stretching back through several millennia. It is not surprising that many of the scholars who have sought to understand the development of her social institutions either have turned to ancient texts for a yardstick to measure the diverse customs of the present day or have sought to generalize for India as a whole from inadequate reports relating to a wide variety of periods and places. The intensive study of a few specified institutions within a limited range of time and space may well seem to be an undramatic and slow route to an understanding of the distinctive qualities of Indian civilization as a whole, and few scholars have chosen this path. Nevertheless it is only on the results of these intensive studies that sound generalizations can be based and, more importantly, it is only through them that new facts about Indian life can emerge and become subject to scientific scrutiny.

Furthermore this route to knowledge which at first sight looks tedious and humdrum proves on closer inspection to be full of interest and excitement. We leave the aseptic world of ritual formulae and legal codes and enter the arena where fellow mortals are using their cultural heritage, not relegating it to the library and museum.

In recent years historians of India have turned increasingly to the detailed study of selected episodes in the recent past for which there is adequate contemporary documentation. Several anthropologists have essayed generalizations about social form in delimited regions. Others, like Dr Madan, have begun the intensive analysis of contemporary social institutions. He has concentrated on certain institutionalized systems of action found among a small segment of the rural population of Kashmir. This population was chosen not in the hope that it might prove typical of much of rural India but rather to provide one well-grounded social datum that would have to be brought into account when speaking about India as a whole.

Indeed, like any good analysis of social life anywhere, Dr Madan's study adds to our understanding of social behaviour in general, without restriction on region and epoch. He writes in this book about Brahman villagers but his study is an analysis neither of village life nor of the institution of caste. Most of the inhabitants of the village where he worked are Muslims, yet in the present context he does not discuss their way of life or even their relations with their Hindu neighbours. In his analysis these are treated as merely part of the given conditions defining the boundary within which the Hindu domestic system operates. A discussion of local Hindu-Muslim relations is promised for another occasion.

Many writers on Hindu life have been so fascinated by caste that the concept has been stretched to include much of kinship and politics and has served as a trite explanation for almost any puzzling feature of behaviour or belief. In rural Kashmir all Hindus belong to the same caste of Sarasvat Brahmans known as Pandits, and hence Dr Madan is able to treat caste as a neutral factor, affecting equally all the actors in the social scene he describes. This clears the way for an analysis of the Pandit domestic system in its own right. He facilitates this by deciding to omit any substantial discussion of the ways in which Kashmiri Hindu practice and precept diverge from codified Hindu orthodoxy. Hinduism was in no sense invented independently in Kashmir, but as a first step in analysis it is useful to restrict attention to the local arena and to see what goes on there with no references to the wider world other than those made by local actors themselves. Dr Madan never asserts that these wider questions are unimportant; but he rightly insists that wider issues cannot be firmly settled without prior reference to well-established local facts.

Many writers on extended and joint households, both in India and in other parts of the world, have described how children are systematically incorporated into the household of their parents and grandparents but have treated the disruption of large households as evidence of decay or change. The falsity of this view is well brought out by Dr Madan. There may well have been joint families in India for many centuries, but no one holds that every present joint family has had an unbroken

existence throughout this period; the genealogical structure of almost every joint family belies this. It is the system that endures through the centuries, while individual families are formed, grow and flourish for several generations, then die out or divide. To be stable, a system must embody not only mechanisms for recruiting new members to existing groups but also institutionalized processes whereby new groups can be formed and others can wither away or break up. The illustrious founders of the joint families of to-day may be seen in retrospect as the upholders of a conservative tradition, yet they became founders only by breaking away from their own brothers and cousins. These features found in the Pandit domestic system are well brought out by Dr Madan, who makes use of a technique developed many years ago by Fortes and recently labelled 'the analysis of developmental cycles'. This enables him to give a most convincing account of the rise and fall of Pandit joint families, with their abiding interest in land and house property. At the same time this is no arid structural analysis, for always we have before us real families each with its own special problems and special solutions. Dr Madan gives a vivid impression of the quite limited extent to which nuclear families may be said to exist as enclaves within the joint family and notes, for example, that domestic solidarity in the joint family is so strong that a married woman cannot even wash her husband's shirt without first collecting the dirty clothes of other members of the household as a pretext for the wash.

Historians may be safe in saying what they like about the dead, but social scientists who write about the living have special responsibilities not to betray the confidence of the people they study. It is therefore a great pleasure to read that the people of Utrassu-Umanagri, the village where Dr Madan and his wife lived, insisted that when he wrote about them in print he would not disguise their identity with pseudonyms. This has raised special problems of exposition, but it points to the trust that the villagers had in Dr Madan and to the authenticity of what they told him.

Dr Madan is a Kashmiri himself and as a social scientist has had to stand back from his own culture in order to look at it in the light of anthropology and sociology. I am sure that

the reader will agree that he has succeeded in this difficult analytical feat and I am glad that this university has been associated with it. Dr Madan has proved himself a true pandit.

J. A. BARNES

Australian National University
27 August 1964

Preface

THIS BOOK is based on my doctoral dissertation which was accepted by the Australian National University in 1959. Its publication was deferred because I hoped that I would be able to revise it after a further spell of fieldwork ; this was, however, precluded by my preoccupation with teaching and other duties at the University of Lucknow. All that I could manage were two return visits to the village of Utrassu-Umanagri in Kashmir, each of only a few days' duration, in 1959 and 1961. I was, however, able to obtain some of the data and clarifications that I wanted, during these visits.

In October 1962 I went to London to take up a visiting lectureship at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. It was there that I was able to commence writing this book. The greater part of the manuscript was ready when I left London in the middle of 1963. The writing was resumed, and finally completed in Dharwar early in 1964.

I may here draw the reader's attention to the more important conventions followed in the book:

(*i*) The data on which it is based refer to the period of fieldwork (January 1957 to January 1958), unless otherwise stated. The tense of the text is, therefore, that of the 'ethnographic present'.

(*ii*) All Kashmiri words have been italicized but no effort has been made at providing their phonetic spelling. With the exception of the word *chulah* (household), which occurs very frequently in the text, and well-known proper names (such as 'Muslim', 'Hindu', 'Brahman' and 'Pandit'), common and proper vernacular nouns have not been pluralised by the addition of a final 's' ; instead it has been left to the verb to indicate the number.

(*iii*) In references of general application to Pandits (urban and rural) of the Kashmir valley, I have omitted the definite article: while writing of the Pandits of rural areas, however, and of Utrassu-Umanagri in particular, the article has been retained.

(*iv*) There is no glossary of Kashmiri terms used in the book as these have been explained in the text itself. Moreover, all such terms as occur in more than one place have been indexed.

Acknowledgements

THE OBLIGATIONS incurred in the preparation of this book, and the collection of the data on which it is based, have been many, and it is a pleasure to record some of them here.

First of all, I would like to acknowledge the encouragement which I received from the late Professor S. F. Nadel in person (I met him in Lucknow early in 1954) and through correspondence. It was on his advice that I applied for an Australian National University Scholarship in 1955. I thank the officers of the University for awarding me a three-year Scholarship which enabled me to undertake fieldwork in Kashmir and subsequently to write my dissertation at Canberra.

The fieldwork was done under the supervision of Dr W. E. H. Stanner. His comments on my fieldwork reports were full of incisive criticism, helpful advice, appreciation—and subtle humour: what a boon to the tired fieldworker! I have learnt much from him, in many ways, and greatly prize his friendship. I also owe him warm thanks for looking after our comforts while my wife and I were in Kashmir.

From the day of my arrival in Canberra till the day of final departure a little over three years later, Dr Derek Freeman showed me, and later my wife, much personal kindness. He also took a very keen interest in my work from the very beginning, and the thesis was written under his exacting supervision. I thank him and Mrs Freeman for all that they did for us.

Professor J. A. Barnes was kind enough to comment upon some of my reports. Later (in 1960) he went through the thesis and made several suggestions for its improvement prior to publication. And now he has put me further in his debt by writing the Foreword.

In writing the book I have also been guided by the comments of Professor M. N. Srinivas on my thesis.

To Dr Adrian C. Mayer and Professor Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf I am grateful for making it possible for me

and my wife to spend nine pleasant and profitable months in England. To them and to Dr F. G. Bailey I also owe much intellectual stimulation.

I also take this opportunity to thank the villagers of Utrassu-Umanagri, particularly the *mahant* Bawa Krishnanand and Pandit Maheshwaranath Marhatta, for their hospitality. I do not know how adequately to express my gratitude to five principal informants who gave me liberally of their time and help and generously of their affection. I write of them in Appendix III (also see plate VI).

Messrs R. N. Bhan, J. N. Durani, Michael Garman, D. N. Kaul and D. N. Madan, Dr Abhaya Kumar, and Mrs Kamala B. N. Sapru helped me at various stages of my work and in various ways. My thanks to them all.

Messrs V. S. Bhadrapur (of K.U.D.) and H. E. Gunther (of the A.N.U.) and my wife have drawn the maps.

Finally, it is a pleasure to record my indebtedness to my wife for her companionship, help, advice and, above all, for her inexhaustible patience. During the fieldwork she had to put up with me babbling about genealogies even in my sleep! And since our return from Utrassu-Umanagri she has listened to endless readings from my manuscripts, often at odd hours. If she is glad that no more work remains to be done on the book (except, of course, preparing the index), I do not blame her!

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Introduction: Problems and Methods

I

Kinship Studies in India

Nearly half a century ago Rivers complained of 'the almost total neglect which the subject of relationship has suffered at the hands of students of Indian Sociology' (1914, p. 27). A review of the subject written over four decades later contains the following apt observation: 'In the present state of knowledge, to write a book on Kinship in India is a daring venture. One would think that, *for a general picture to be attempted, a number of intensive studies should first be written,* and, apart from tribal monographs, we have very few of them indeed' (Dumont and Pocock 1957, p. 44) (italics mine).

At the time of writing (December 1962), the number of *intensive field studies* of Hindu kinship can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The earliest of these is Srinivas's famous book on the Coorgs (see Srinivas 1952). Though primarily concerned with an examination of the role of religion in social life, it contains a fairly detailed analysis of the Coorg joint family called the *okka* (in Chapter V which is devoted to the cult of the *okka*). Gough's publications on the matrilineal Nayar of Malabar (see Gough 1952a, 1952b, 1955, 1958, 1959 and 1961) are the most detailed analysis of marriage and kinship in an Indian community published so far. Though not as detailed, but equally sophisticated, is Mayer's excellent monograph on caste and kinship in Malwa (see Mayer 1960). His interest in kinship derives from his interest in the analysis of the internal structure of caste.

The only other book-length study devoted exclusively to the Hindu family is by Ross (1961). It is not a fieldwork monograph

in the strict social anthropological tradition, being based on case studies the data for which were obtained from 157 Hindu interviewees of middle and upper classes, representing three Dravidian and one Indo-Aryan linguistic groups (see Ross 1961, Appendix I).

Besides the above, there are several papers, and chapters in books devoted to other themes, but these are by their very nature limited in scope. Mention may here be made of Dube (1955, Chap. V), Dumont (1950, 1953 and 1957a),[1] Gough (1956), and the relevant papers by Desai, Kapadia and others in the *Sociological Bulletin* (1954, 1955, 1956 and 1959).

Karve's *Kinship Organization in India* (1953) is the only general compendium of kinship terminologies and usages covering most of the linguistic-cum-cultural regions of the country (excluding the Kashmir Valley) ; but, as may be expected, not all of her material is based on intensive first-hand fieldwork (see Dumont and Pocock 1957, p. 44).[2]

Rivers (1914, pp. 25-27) has speculated that had Morgan predicted, on the basis of the Dravidian kinship terms available to him, that cross-cousin marriage was the usage of which these terms were a social consequence, then kinship studies in India would not have suffered from neglect. Almost 50 years later, we have to-day to search deeper for a cause of this continued neglect, though I must hasten to add that the situation has shown marked signs of improvement in the last ten years.

It seems to me that there are two basic reasons for the inadequate attention which Indian and foreign anthropologists have paid to the need for empirical field studies of Hindu kinship. The first has been the preoccupation with caste and its place in Hindu society. Its uniqueness (real or supposed) seems to have fascinated nearly all students of Hindu society, and the interest has been both wide-spread and abiding. Civil servants,

[1] This author's *Une Sous-Caste de l' Inde du Sud* (1957b), hailed as a major work by several Indianists, unfortunately remains untranslated into English and, therefore, a closed book for all those who cannot read French.

[2] Since the above was written a book by Berreman (1963) has come out ; it contains a long and useful discussion of 'kin groups and kinship' among the Paharis of North India.

journalists, politicians, Indologists, historians, and social scientists have regularly added publication after publication (and theory after theory) to the vast, and in part confused, literature on Hindu castes. Majumdar rightly complains that 'We have simplified the social structure of our country by equating it with the magic word 'caste'' (1958, p. 171).

Those conscious of this error have found it difficult to separate the family from the caste, though this by no means justifies the neglect of Hindu family and kinship at the hands of social anthropologists. Panikkar, a social historian, writes: 'Though in theory unconnected, these two institutions, the caste and the joint family are in practice interlocked to an extent which makes them in effect a common institution. The unit of the Hindu society is not the individual but the *joint family*. The widest expression of this family is the 'sub-caste' which often consists of a few joint families which inter-marry and inter-dine among themselves' (1955, p. 19). Similarly Karve has said: 'Every caste is endogamous. Ordinarily, one has no relative out of one's caste group, and one's relatives are all within the caste. A part of the caste is a person's actual extended kin and the rest is his possible kin. In such circumstances, caste stands for many values realized in a family and caste loyalties are comparable to family loyalties' (1956, p. 55). Dumont also writes to the same effect: '. . . South Indian kinship cannot be severed from the caste system' (1957a, p. 7).

There is no apparent reason why the fact that the Hindu family is submerged in caste should have inhibited an interest in the former. In fact, one would expect that a study of caste would entail the study of kinship. The expected has not happened because it has been intercaste relations, or, in other words, the external order of the caste which has attracted greater attention than its internal structure. Dumont (1957a) briefly but convincingly shows how in south India an interest directed at the notion of hierarchy or caste status inevitably brings one to an analysis of marriage alliances. It is, however, Mayer who brings out clearly and in detail the consequences of the two viewpoints in the study of caste. He writes: 'On the whole, caste membership is significant for relations with other castes, and subcaste membership for activities within the caste.

In turn, these activities are in fact based on the decisions of a local kindred' (1960, p. 5). It is because he is as much interested in the internal constitution of the caste, as in its politico-economic and ritual aspects, that Mayer is led to examine kinship in his study of village life in central India.

In the study of caste, as well as kinship, modern students have had to reckon with a considerable body of Sanskrit literature, its vernacular translations and commentaries. Reliance on this tradition as reflective of the contemporary usages of various historical periods has been, not only probably erroneous, but has also acted as a blight on the growth of field studies.[3] The British Government of India strengthened the Indian reverence for the written text—though this could hardly be said to have been the intention—by codifying Hindu domestic law which had been gradually changing over the centuries (for a brief discussion, see Madan 1965). This, it seems to me, has been the second important cause for the neglect of the study of Hindu kinship *as it is* in the villages of India today, rather than as it is portrayed in the relevant literature. One must complain that, though the work of many of them is very useful (see, for example, Kapadia 1947 and 1955), far too many scholars have been content to translate and comment on ancient and medieval Sanskrit texts, regarding them as the perennial source from which all the jural norms and the ideals of Hindu kinship flow.

II

The Present Study

My decision to undertake an intensive study of the working of the Hindu family was made in view of the need for such studies. The decision to study the family among the Brahmans of Kashmir[4] was taken for two different reasons:

(*i*) I was born and brought up in the city of Srinagar (in the

[3] Cf. Srinivas (1962) p. 8 *et passim*.

[4] Throughout this book 'Kashmir' stands only for the Kashmir Valley and not for the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

MAP OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE
SHOWING THE THREE ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS
CONSTITUTING THE VALLEY OF KASHMIR

CEASE FIRE LINE

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

INDIA

BARAMULA

SRINAGAR

ANANTNAG

PAKISTAN

Valley). I moved out of Kashmir in 1949 to study and later to teach at the University of Lucknow. I have, however, retained an interest in Kashmiri (Hindu and Muslim) ways of life and have wanted to study them. Whereas almost every other linguistic-cum-cultural region in India has been the subject of some anthropological or sociological study, Kashmir has so far attracted only the writers of general and travel books. The number of such publications is undoubtedly large, and although some of them contain good material which would interest an anthropologist (see, e.g. Koul 1924), none of these are anthropological studies. The only such study I know of is an unpublished M.A. thesis by my sister, Kamala Sapru, *née* Madan, entitled *Life Cycle of Kashmiri Pandit Women*, and based on 50 biographies collected by her in 1954-55.

(*ii*) Except two Brahman subcastes, there are no Hindu castes in rural Kashmir. This simplicity of the social situation attracted me as my main interest was in the study of kinship and not intercaste relations. The Brahmans co-reside with Muslims in most villages, but do not interdine or intermarry with them. The two religious communities engage in economic transactions, which gives their interrelations a semblance of the *jajmani* organization, but they certainly do not constitute one single society. A Brahman can enter the Muslim society by renouncing his religion, but there is no known 'route' for the entry of a Muslim into the Brahmanic fold.

Fieldwork

The opportunity for my study of the family system of Kashmiri Brahmans arose when I was awarded a scholarship by the Australian National University in 1955. After six months' preparatory study at Canberra, I arrived in Srinagar in December 1956. From January 1957 to January 1958 I made an intensive study of the domestic organization among the Brahmans of the village of Utrassu-Umanagri in south Kashmir. I also paid brief visits, each lasting a week, to five other villages in central and south Kashmir. I had hoped to spend the concluding quarter of my fieldwork time in other villages, but the year 1957 turned out to be one of unusually inclement weather in Kashmir. After a normal winter, the spring rains lasted

longer than usual, delaying the timely sowing for the summer and autumn crops (maize and paddy respectively). Some parts of the Valley were flooded in August-September, but fortunately Utrassu-Umanagri was not affected. The main paddy crop was still green when snow fell all over Kashmir late in October, about six weeks earlier than usual. This resulted in loss for me in two ways: Firstly, severe shortage of grain led to the postponement of several marriages, initiation ceremonies and house-building plans, depriving me of additional opportunities for the collection of data. Secondly, the mud and slush of the countryside precluded me from undertaking the proposed visits to other villages.

I chose a village as the locus of my study, not because I was interested in making a village study, but because I wanted to make *intensive* and *extensive* observations of all the Brahman households of a convenient territorial unit. (A ward or a neighbourhood in Srinagar, or one of the towns was, after considerable thought, rejected as an alternative for a variety of reasons.)

The village of Utrassu-Umanagri was chosen for four reasons:

(*i*) It lies to the south of Srinagar, whereas the tribal raids into Kashmir from across the border in 1947-48 took place from the west and affected the whole of the north-western part of the Valley.

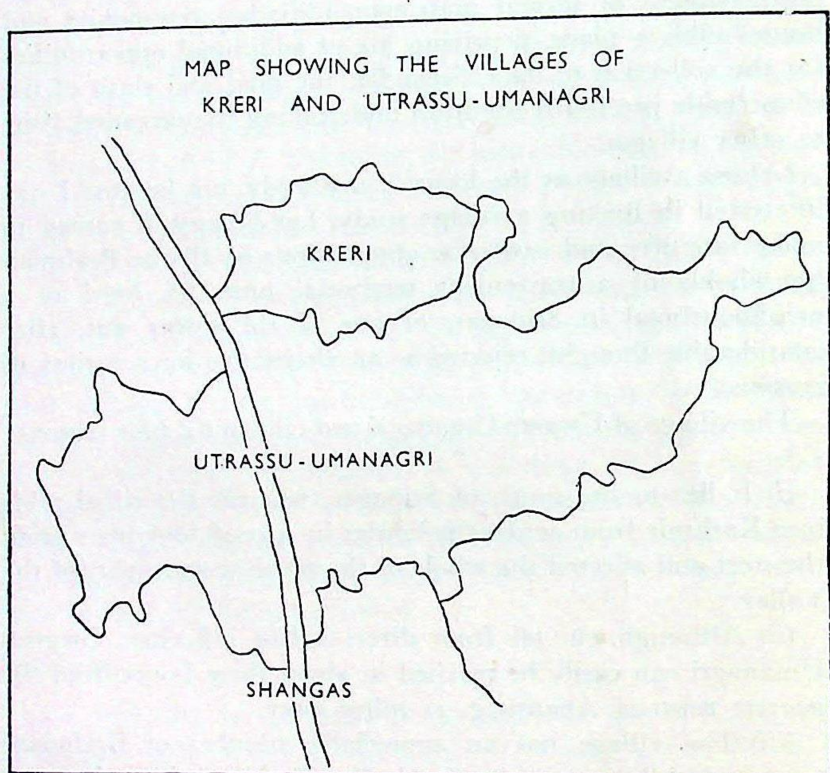
(*ii*) Although cut off from direct urban influence, Utrassu-Umanagri can easily be reached in about three hours from the nearest town of Anantnag, 11 miles away.

(*iii*) The village has an appreciable number of Brahmans (522) and of Brahman households (87). No other village in south Kashmir (the District of Anantnag) has a larger Brahman population.

(*iv*) Although one of the two Brahman subcastes is non-existent in the village itself, several of their households are to be found in the adjoining village of Kreri and, therefore, could be easily included in my investigations.

The following account of the Kashmiri Brahman family system, though based almost exclusively on data drawn from a

single village, is not a village study as no effort will be made to discuss Muslim kinship, or to go into the details of the nature and magnitude of Brahman-Muslim interaction. The latter topic was also inquired into in the course of fieldwork, and I hope to be able to publish an analysis of the material obtained sometime in future.



Further, the data which I obtained from Utrassu-Umanagri are, as far as I have been able to ascertain,[5] by no means entirely peculiar to that village; in fact, in large measure they are not. Utrassu-Umanagri is fairly representative of the relatively

[5] I visited five villages, besides Utrassu-Umanagri; obtained information about several other villages from informants who visited Utrassu-Umanagri during my stay there; and talked with many Pandits in the city of Srinagar and the town of Anantnag.

isolated Kashmiri village. This book is, therefore, offered as an analytical description of the family system of the Brahmans of rural Kashmir.

Scope

Since Malinowski's time it has come to be widely accepted that fieldwork always should begin with a problem. Fortes regards Radcliffe-Brown's insistence upon 'the standard scientific technique of starting from an hypothesis' etc. (1949b, p. vii) as one of the master's great contributions. Recently Leach has reemphasized the importance of a concern with problems, but has also clearly shown how the defective posing or location of problems may turn out to be an obstruction to research by involving 'prior category assumptions' (1961b, Chap. 1). Employing hindsight, I could today spell out a fairly complicated *problemstellung* as having been my starting point. But I guess it will be best to state (and that too without any feelings of guilt) that I began fieldwork with the aim of rendering intelligible *in sociological terms* the working of the Hindu kinship system in Kashmir. The lack of a more concisely stated problem was not wholly self-imposed in a flush of Baconian righteousness; it was also made inevitable by the dearth of problem-oriented or hypothesis-loaded studies of Hindu kinship.[6] The primary need in 1956 seemed to be for intensive field studies;[7] and, as far as I can see, it continues to be the primary need today. I have, therefore, remained content in this book with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected by me in the course of a year of aim-oriented fieldwork.

The theoretical framework within which I have tried to analyze the data has been a structural one. In other words, the data have been analyzed in terms of the notion that social

[6] I am aware that the followers of Karl Popper will reject this hesitation on the ground that one does not have to depend upon a large body of empirical data to propose an hypothesis ('conjecture'), but I confess that my present interest is in fieldwork—the collection and analysis of empirical data—rather than in the fascinating Popperian procedure of eliminating error in theory through 'conjecture and refutation'. (I am grateful to Dr Robert Brown of the ANU for drawing my attention to Popper's work.)

[7] See the quotation from Dumont and Pocock (1957) on page 1 above.

relationships express mutual, but not necessarily equal, 'command' (Nadel) which different persons, or groups of persons, have over each others' actions. The inadequacy of structural approaches to come to grips with the passage of time is, of course, well-known, but is also often exaggerated through an 'equation of structural with static analysis' (Nadel 1957, p. 128). 'For we cannot but define social positions in terms of behaviour sequences, which consume time and happen on a time scale; relationships cannot but be abstracted from successive repetitive actions (Firth's 'acts of choice and decision') which we collect together in such class concepts as subordination, reciprocity, respect, loyalty, rivalry and the like. Time 'enters' in all of these' (*ibid.*).[8]

Further, the kinship system of the Kashmiri Brahmans was fairly stable when I did my fieldwork. Recent politico-economic events were just beginning to bring about major changes in their domestic organization, but at the time of fieldwork these had not proceeded very far. It was possible to follow their course and analyze their consequences for the kinship system in functional terms. Supplementary concepts—prominently that of 'the developmental cycle of domestic groups'—were also employed to accommodate diachronic data.

Fortes has stated that 'all kinship institutions have only two major facets, or if we like, functions. They serve as a mechanism of organizing social activities and co-ordinating social relations, either in a limited sector of social life or in relation to all social interests; and they at the same time constitute the primary mould of the individual's psycho-social development' (1949a, p. 339). My own approach has been exclusively in terms of the first of the two functions mentioned by Fortes. I attempted to find out the spheres of the Kashmiri Brahman's life into which, using Firth's words, 'kinship enters as an articulating principle' (1936, p. 577). Thus I tried to determine the structure and func-

[8] In a letter dated Canberra, April 13, 1954, Nadel wrote to me: '. . . your point about "structure" implying a time dimension, being an abstraction from events happening in time, is well taken. In fact, in my essay on "Social Structure: A Re-Analysis", which I hope to bring out in the near future, I explicitly describe social structures as "event structures", comparable to the atomic structures of physics which equally derive from the repetitiveness of events in time.'

tion of the domestic group in the Kashmiri Brahman society, and further attempted to analyze its interrelations with other wider groupings and categories of kin.

The starting point of the investigations was a sociological census. The main methods used later to obtain data were (*i*) interviewing, (*ii*) collection of genealogies, family 'histories' and biographies, and (*iii*) participant observation. The various approaches for the collection of data on kinship suggested by Firth (1936, pp. 117ff.), viz. the residential, the alimentary, the biographical, and the linguistic approaches, and the approach through material culture, were all employed in varying degrees. Biographies of selected individuals were obtained to throw light on kinship roles and interkin behaviour, but not on the psycho-social development of the individual (as visualized, for instance, by Malinowski and, more recently, Parsons).

My being a Kashmiri was of advantage to me mainly in as much as I did not have to learn the language. In the course of my fieldwork, however, I became keenly conscious of certain disadvantages of my position, and it may be worthwhile to briefly mention some of these here.

It is undoubtedly of great importance that an anthropologist should be able to mix freely with the people he studies, but he must also keep at a distance so that he does not lose his scientific perspective.[9] Whereas my being a Kashmiri helped me in mixing freely with the villagers, I often felt that I did not have enough time and opportunity to withdraw myself from company and to examine the data that were daily flowing in. Visitors called on me whenever it suited them. I could not turn away any person because doing so would have been an unpardonable action for a Kashmiri, and it was as a Kashmiri, peculiar in some ways, but a Kashmiri nonetheless, that the villagers regarded me. Many villagers came to speak to me about their affairs (giving me sometimes much valuable data), not because I was an interested investigator, but because I was a Kashmiri more experienced than them in some ways. My non-Kashmiri wife, who was with me in the field, did not experience this difficulty of lack of leisure.

[9] Benjamin Paul (1953, pp. 430-51) has listed the dangers of 'emotional identification' and cited the cases of some anthropologists who 'went native'!

I may here also refer to the lack of social freedom which an investigator faces in the study of his own society, and to which Firth has drawn attention (see Firth 1954, pp. 2f.). Being a Kashmiri also meant that, during the earlier stages of my field-work, I had to limit the scope of my inquiries and refrain from asking questions about a variety of topics. The villagers either expected me to know the answers, and often had doubts about my exact intentions when I asked such questions, or they expected me to observe a code of etiquette (which a non-Kashmiri might not have been) and not ask certain types of questions. Thus, I could never carry on detailed and free conversation with any woman between the ages of about 18 and 50, nor could I discuss with any of them topics pertaining to personal aspects of marital life. Even many male informants became reticent when the conversation turned to matters relating to wealth and sex. I was, however, greatly helped by the fact that the Kashmiri Brahmans are, by and large, a literate people; I was able to show them anthropological studies of other peoples and explain my aims. Many of them are, in fact, keenly looking forward to the publication of this book, and have elicited a promise from me that I will not call their village by a pseudonym.

This last condition imposed by my interviewees, informants, and other 'friends' in the village has created a problem for me. I have had to suppress many incidents and happenings, or to omit details, for fear of hurting the villagers; it would have been not only ungrateful but also unethical to disregard their feelings in this matter. I have also changed many proper names in the illustrations or cases cited, and often taken examples from other villages (when the same were available to me). The latter have been also occasionally included in the discussion, whenever I did not have an example from Utrassu-Umanagri itself. The fact that the Brahmans have essentially the same culture and social organization all over rural Kashmir made this procedure possible and gave it validity.

There are certain other deliberate omissions in this book which I should like to draw attention to here:

(*i*) The rituals of kinship and domestic life among the Kashmiri Brahmans are a combination of Sanskritic rites and

non-Sanskritic ceremonies. A thorough study of the same would not only bring in problems—e.g. that of the relation between the Great and the Little Traditions (see Redfield 1956, Chap. III)—in which I am not here interested, but would also require considerable discussion. I have, therefore, only briefly discussed the significance of some of these rituals. This has not been a great sacrifice since my approach is basically in terms of the mutual rights and obligations and the common interests which hold a kinship system together.

(*ii*) Apart from one or two cross references, I have also avoided any attempt to show how far the jural rules of kinship among the Kashmiri Brahmans depart from the codified Hindu law. For the purposes of a study like the present one, it is obviously far more important that we find out what the people believe the rules to be, rather than inquire what they actually are. Moreover, it is an established practice in the Indian courts of law that, in the area of Hindu kinship, whenever local custom (*lokachar*) conflicts with the codified law, the former is usually allowed to prevail over the latter.

(*iii*) Many readers will probably note the absence of any attempt at comparison more than any of the above-mentioned omissions. I have considered the matter very carefully and finally decided not to undertake systematic comparison.

The reasons are several:

(*i*) My main aim is not to discuss any hypothesis by the Radcliffe-Brownian method commended by Fortes,[10] but to present an intensive study of the working of the family system among the Brahmans of rural Kashmir. The facts must come first before they may be put to use in 'building up' a body of scientific knowledge. (The objection that scientific knowledge may never be 'built up' need not detain us here.)

(*ii*) Then there is the question of what to compare my data with for the endeavour to be fruitful. In the absence of a

[10] '. . . comparative sociology must use the standard scientific technique of starting from an hypothesis, testing it by intensive fieldwork, modifying the original hypothesis in the light of the field results, and continuing thus to build up a systematic body of knowledge' (Fortes 1949b, p. vii).

reasonably large number of field studies of Hindu kinship and of agreement over the use of even some basic terms, such as the joint family, this is not an easy question to answer. Worthwhile cross-cultural comparisons would present even greater difficulties, beginning with the search for 'non-culture bound units' (see Kluckhohn 1953). Further, basic questions regarding the aims of comparison also need careful scrutiny (see (3) and (4) below). All this is beyond the scope of the present work. Nothing would defeat my purpose more than the virtual disappearance of my Kashmiri Brahman material in a welter of selective and loosely organised comparative data, or in logomachy and theoretical disputation.

All that I have, therefore, done is to draw attention (in footnotes) to a few similarities between my data and those of some other anthropologists, at some places to better clarify a point, and at others to draw attention to the occurrence of a social phenomenon in more than one region or society.[11]

(*iii*) If the purpose of comparison is to deepen our understanding of a particular social phenomenon, then the suitable procedure is not the one advocated by Radcliffe-Brown and Fortes, but by Evans-Pritchard and Pocock (see Pocock 1961, p. 91): one should look not only for the similarities, but also for the differences between the phenomena being compared.

(*iv*) If we compare in order to generalize, then Leach (1961a, Chap. I) has so forcefully shown how unnecessary, and even defective, this procedure is for that purpose.[12]

I wonder if all the king's horses, and all the king's men can put 'Comparative Method' together again!

[11] I do not of course mean to suggest that comparison is of no use at any level of analysis. Such an assertion would be both untrue and absurd, for without intracultural comparison one would never be able to discern any order in social behaviour. Further, the use of a language *other than that of the people studied,* in describing their way of life, implies that comparison is made, though not in very precise terms.

[12] The subject of Professor Evans-Pritchard's Hobhouse Memorial Lecture for 1963 was the comparative method as used by social anthropologists. He too was very critical of it, though for quite different reasons from those of Dr Leach.

Kashmiri Pandits : History and Social Organization

I

The Hindus of Kashmir

The ubiquitous Brahman *varna* of India is composed of several regional castes, some of which are of considerable antiquity. Thus there is the Puranic division between the northern Gauda Brahmans and the southern Dravida Brahmans, the Vindhyas being the dividing line. Each division has five subdivisions, and one of the Gaudian subdivisions is that of the Sarasvat named after the river Sarasvati and mainly resident in areas to its west. The Sarasvati is believed to flow underground from where it 'loses itself in the deserts north of Rajputana' till it joins the Ganga and the Yamuna at Prayag (see Dowson 1950, p. 283; Misra n.d.; Oppert 1894, pp. 22 and 117f.; and Colebrook 1873, II, p. 21). Today the Sarasvat are found in Kashmir, the Punjab, western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and along the western coast mainly in Maharashtra, Goa and Mysore.

The Sarasvat Brahmans of Kashmir, who constitute the great majority of the native Hindus, prefer a somewhat different interpretation of their caste name. Several of my informants linked it to that of Sarasvati, the Brahmanic Goddess of Learning, and claimed that Kashmiri Brahmans are distinct from the Sarasvat Brahmans elsewhere. In this connection it may be mentioned that in the *Jatimala* Sarasvat and Kashmiri Brahmans are mentioned separately (see Colebrook 1873, II, p. 159). The Sarasvat of the western coast, however, claim descent from Kashmiri Brahmans (see *The Chitrapur Saraswat Census Report and Directory* 1956, p. 72).

The Brahmans of Kashmir were in past times renowned for

their learning and scholastic achievements, and are known as Kashmiri Pandits all over India. As is well known, the Sanskrit word *pandit* means 'a learned man'. They refer to themselves by the word *b(h)atta,* which is the Prakrit form of the Sanskrit *bhartri,* meaning 'doctor', 'the designation of great scholars' (Macdonell 1924). Since the term 'Kashmiri Pandit' is better known, it will be used throughout this book in preference to the native *B(h)atta.*

Besides Pandits, there are two other Hindu minority groups in Kashmir, viz. the Buher (or Bohra) and the Purib (or Purbi). They have been almost assimilated into Pandit culture, although intermarriage and interdining are as yet the exception rather than the rule. The historical origins of these two groups are not clear.

Lawrence (1895, p. 302 ; 1909, p. 40) maintains that the Bohra are 'Khattris' and probably of Punjabi origin. Hutton writes of the 'Khatri' as 'A trading caste of the Punjab and north-west India' (1951, p. 282). According to some of my Pandit informants, the Bohra are descended from Pandits who lost caste during the early days of Muslim rule, either because they failed to observe essential rituals out of the fear of punitive taxes, or because they temporarily accepted conversion to Islam as a matter of expediency. A Khatri origin is more probable as the Bohra are found only in urban areas and their traditional occupation is trade and shop-keeping. In fact, the word *bohra* (or *buhur,* singular of *buher*) is often used in Kashmir in the sense of a grocer.[1]

The Purbi, also found only in urban areas, are probably descended from an immigrant Brahman caste. According to several of my Pandit informants they came to Kashmir from the Chambha Valley in east Punjab several hundred years ago. The appellation of Pandit is commonly used by the Purbi as it is by Pandits themselves.

[1] According to Misra (n.d.) the Sarasvat Brahmans were linked to the Khatri as their priests ; and whenever a Khatri group moved out of their traditional country, the Panchanada (modern Punjab), they carried their priests with them. Also see Rose (1911, II, pp. 122 ff.) for the special *jajmani* relationship between the Sarsut (i.e. Sarasvat) and the Khatri of the Punjab.

There has also been an influx of Hindus from Jammu and the Punjab during the last hundred years or so, but they are all confined to the city of Srinagar and preserve their linguistic and cultural identity.

Population

According to the 1961 census 89,102 of the 1,899,438 inhabitants of Kashmir are Hindus, constituting about 5 per cent of the total population.[2]

The Hindu population of the Valley has increased steadily since 1891, when it was 52,576, but has failed to keep pace with the increase in the total population as is evident from the fact that the foregoing 1891 figure represented about 7 per cent of the total population (see Lawrence 1895, p. 225). Separate demographic figures for Pandits are not available in the 1961 census records, as castewise enumeration of population is not obtained now. No census was taken in Kashmir in 1951 owing to the disturbed conditions then prevalent, following the invasion of the State of Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistani tribesmen in 1947. According to the 1941 census, however, there were 76,868 Pandits in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (see Wreford 1943, Vol. XXII, Pts. I & II, p. 11).

Pandits Domiciled Outside Kashmir

Contrary to what their name may suggest, Kashmiri Pandits are found not only in the Valley but also in many cities of north India, such as Jammu, Jaipur, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Allahabad, and Benares. Before the partition of the Subcontinent in 1947, Lahore also had a sizeable Pandit population. There is at present a Kashmiri Association of Europe (36 Hereford Street, London, W.2), whose founder-chairman, Mr L. Zutshi, is a Pandit from Srinagar who has been living in England since about 1920.

These Pandits, domiciled outside the land of their forefathers, have produced some of the best known of political personalities of modern India, notably Motilal Nehru

[2] Besides the Hindus, there were 1,793,300 Muslims, 16,713 Sikhs, 304 Christians, 11 Buddhists and 5 Jains resident in Kashmir in 1961. *See Census of India, Paper No. 1 of 1963 : 1961 Census—Religion,* pp. 14f.

2

(1861-1931), Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949), and Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-), as also a number of illustrious Urdu *littérateurs* such as Rattan Nath Dhar Sarshar (1846-1902) and Anand Narain Mulla (1901-).

Historians have recorded that whenever, between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries, Muslim rule became too oppressive for Pandits, many of them emigrated out of the Valley to seek their fortunes elsewhere in India. They preserved many of their customs and practices, and maintained their individuality by observing the rule of endogamy. Lawrence wrote about 75 years ago: 'It is an interesting fact that Kashmiri emigrants in distant parts of India retain their old language, though generations have passed since they left the valley' (1895, p. 454). Today few, if any, of the old time emigrants speak Kashimiri. However, they seem to have succeeded in preserving some customs which have disappeared from Kashmir. In 1959 a young Pandit woman of Srinagar was married into a Pandit family of Allahabad. A day before the solemnization of the marriage, the bridegroom's sisters and sister-in-law visited the bride's house and presented to the bride garlands and bracelets made of flowers. This ceremony called *phoolon-ka-gahna*, 'the (presentation of) flower-ornaments', it today unknown among the Pandits of Kashmir but, as some old women recalled on the occasion, it was performed in older days.

Kashmiri Brahmans Under Early Muslim Rule

One of the typical features of Kashmiri Hindu society is the absence of non-Brahman castes in it, though it was not always thus. Beginning with the mid-seventh century, there are many references to castes in the *Rajatarangini*.[3] *Brahmana, kshattriya, damara* (feudal lords), *vaishya, kayastha* (clerical castes), merchants, watchmen, scavangers, *chandala* and many others are mentioned (see Kaul 1954, pp. 214ff., and Ghoshal 1957, pp. 207-15).

The first mention of Muslims dates back to the reign of the Hindu king Harsha (A.D. 1089-1101), who is said to have enlisted

[3] *Rajatarangini*, by Pandit Kalhana, is a twelfth century Sanskrit verse chronicle on Kashmir from the earliest times to A.D. 1150. One of the best annotated translations is by Stein (1900).

them in his army. However, they do not seem to have played any significant role in the political and cultural history of Kashmir till A.D. 1320.[4] In that year a Tartar warlord, Dulucha (Zulqadar Khan), invaded Kashmir. Suhadeva, the Hindu king, fled from the Valley; nor did Dulucha stay long. After pillage and plunder he withdrew, but no sooner was he gone than a Tibetan Buddhist chieftain's son, Rinchana, invaded the prostrate Hindu kingdom. He was given a stiff fight by a Brahman noble, Ramchandra, who was, however, killed by treachery. Rinchana then proclaimed himself the king, married Ramchandra's daughter Kota, and sought to become a Hindu, but the Brahmans refused to proselytize him. Subsequently he embraced Islam. He collected many Muslims at his court, among them one Shah Mir, an immigrant from Swat, who had earlier taken up service with Suhadeva. Rinchana died in A.D. 1323 leaving behind an infant son. Suhadeva's younger brother Udyanadeva came to the throne, but real power rested in the hands of Kota who now married him. He died in A.D. 1339, and Shah Mir became the next king after a brief struggle with Kota. Kashmir was ruled by Muslims for the next 500 years (A.D. 1339-1819).

For our purpose two periods during the early years of Muslim rule are of vital importance: the reigns of Sikandar (A.D. 1389-1413) and Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470).

To begin with, Sikandar was a tolerant king, but later on he became very oppressive towards his Hindu subjects under the influence of his advisers and courtiers, some of them immigrant Muslims and others converts from Hinduism. He imposed punitive taxes upon them, banned many of their religious ceremonies, and looted and demolished their temples—the ruins of which may be seen even today all over Kashmir (see Kak 1936). Not satisfied with these measures, the king is said to have eventually proclaimed all over his kingdom that his Hindu subjects should choose between Islam, exile or the sword. Large scale conversions to Islam followed and many people escaped out of Kashmir. 'By the end of his reign all Hindu inhabitants of the valley, except the Brahmans, had probably adopted

[4] The following account is based upon Sufi (1949, I), Kak (1936) and Kilam (1955).

Islam' (Lawrence 1909, p. 24). Tradition has it that only eleven Brahman families survived in Kashmir when Sikandar died in A.D. 1413-14 (see Lawrence 1895, p. 191).

Sikandar was succeeded by his elder son who passed on the throne to his younger brother in A.D. 1420. The new king Zain-ul-Abidin was to become famous as the *bad shah* (great king), even as his father had earned the title of the *but shikan* (iconoclast). Restored to health by a Brahman physician, who asked for no fees except 'mercy for his co-religionists', Zain-ul-Abidin revoked most of the anti-Hindu laws and strove to restore confidence among his Hindu subjects. 'The destruction of Hindu scriptures was forthwith stopped. The Brahmans who had fled were repatriated, their lands and property which had been usurped by Muslims were restored to them. The annual capitation tax . . . was reduced to a nominal fee . . . and later was entirely abolished. Sacrifices and pilgrimages were again permitted. Prohibition against cremation was removed. The schools were reopened, and Hindu boys were allowed to study their own scriptures. The king . . . himself attended Hindu shrines, performed sacrifices, built monasteries, and not only acquired a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit, but employed all his available time in the study of its sacred books' (Kak 1936, p. 34).

The descendants of the Brahmans of Zain-ul-Abidin's time are the Pandits of today. The descendants of the families which survived in Kashmir during Sikandar's time are known as the *malamasi,* and the descendants of the fugitives, who returned to Kashmir during Zain-ul-Abidin's reign, as the *banamasi.* The only difference between these two divisions of Pandit society is in the manner in which they reckon the additional month in the three-yearly leap year of the Hindu lunar calendar.

Later History

The 'golden period' of the *bad shah* was followed by less favourable times. A change of dynasty brought Muslim Chaks to the throne and a period of hardship for Pandits. After 26 years of Chak rule, Kashmir became a province of the Mughal Empire in A.D. 1586, and was ruled by viceroys, some kind and

tolerant and others cruel towards Pandits. The last of the great Mughals, Aurangzeb, 'visited the valley only once; but in that brief time he showed his zeal against the unbelievers, and his name is still execrated by the Brahmans' (Lawrence 1909, p. 25).

Kashmir was conquered for the Afghans by Ahmad Shah Durani in A.D. 1752. Hard times followed for Pandits once again. Although some of them rose high in Afghanistan—one even became prime minister at Kabul—, at home they were engaged in a constant struggle to keep themselves alive under their Afghan rulers. 'Governors from Kabul plundered and tortured the people indiscriminately, but reserved their worst cruelties for the Brahmans, the Shiahs, and the Bambas of the Jhelum Valley' (Lawrence 1909, p. 25). A conspiracy was hatched: a Pandit, Birbal Dar, escaped from Srinagar, and after a long and hazardous journey over mountains and snow-bound passes, reached the court of Ranjit Singh at Lahore in 1819. The Sikh potentate was apprised of the situation in Kashmir and induced to incorporate it in his empire. Kashmir was conquered by the Sikhs, but they proved better than the Afghans only in as much as they completely neglected Kashmir and the needs of the Kashmiris, and did not discriminate against Pandits in favour of Muslims as the earlier Muslim rulers had done.

In 1846 the battle of Sobraon saw the collapse of Sikh power in northern India. In March, that year, the British Government of India transferred to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu the Sikh possessions in the north, including Jammu and Kashmir, and in return received from him Rs. 7,500,000 (one million pounds). Thus began the rule of yet another alien dynasty over Kashmir. For Pandits, however, this proved far better than the previous 500 years of Muslim and Sikh rule, as it saved them from religious persecution and enabled them to rehabilitate themselves. They were in many respects favoured by the Hindu Government as against the Muslims, and were quick to take advantage of these favourable circumstances (see Bazaz 1941, pp. 250f.). By 1947, when Dogra rule came to an abrupt end, Pandits had improved their economic and political position to such an extent as to be identified with the ruling class of

Dogra Hindus in the eyes of the Muslims. However, many Pandits had argued for more than a decade that their interests lay in joining the Kashmiri Muslims against the Dogra rulers; consequently the national Government which was formed in 1948 consisted of both Muslims and Pandits, as well as anti-monarchist Dogras. The political and economic changes which have taken place in the State of Jammu and Kashmir since 1947 are bound to have far-reaching consequences for the Pandits. Some of these will be briefly discussed in Chapter 7.

II

Pandit Subcastes

It was in Zain-ul-Abidin's time that Pandit society evolved an internal differentiation which has by now rigidly set into a two-fold division. After the king had restored confidence among the Brahmans, they felt the need for equipping themselves for the new opportunities that might be offered to them and for any contingency that might arise in future. Accordingly they turned increasingly to the study of Persian, the court language, and sought work as officials, translators and clerks in the government. They were encouraged by the king in these pursuits. It seems that a convention soon became established whereby most of the sons in a Pandit family studied Persian and only one or two devoted themselves to the study of Sanskrit and the scriptures. The latter looked after the performance of family rituals. Kilam writes: '. . . it was decided that a daughter's son of a person should be made *bhasha* ['language', i.e. Sanskrit, the language of the scriptures] Batta to administer to the religious needs of his maternal grandfather's family' (1955, p. 53). He gives no reason for this curious arrangement, and does not clarify how it gave rise to patrilineal endogamous divisions in Pandit society.

Historians are, however, agreed that in course of time this division of labour evolved into a two-fold division of the society based upon occupation and fortified by endogamy. Those Pandits who devoted themselves to the study of the scriptures

and the performance of priestly duties came to be known as the *bhasha* Bhatta or, more simply, the *gor* (derived from the Sanskrit *guru* for 'guide' or 'preceptor'). Those who continued to study the scriptures without taking up priestly duties were called the *pandit* or *jyotishi* (astrologers). The followers of secular occupations were called the *karkun* ('workers'); today they far outnumber the other two groups. The *jyotishi* have not grown into an endogamous group, as have the *gor*, and may intermarry with the *karkun*, but not with the *gor*.

Numerically preponderant and economically better off, the *karkun* have arrogated to themselves the higher position in the Pandit social hierarchy. The *gor* are regarded as inauspicious, mean and greedy. The main reason for this attitude seems to be the fact that they receive food and other gifts from their *yajaman* (clients or patrons) in the name of the dead.

Hereditary occupational specialization, endogamy and an explicit differentiation in social status have thus produced an internal subdivision of Pandit society into two subcastes. It is of interest to note that most priests do not even now wear leather-made footwear because contact with leather is polluting to a Brahman, and tie their turban in what must have been the ancient Pandit fashion. The *karkun* turban is of Muslim style, though in recent years many priests also have adopted it.

The relationship of a priest with his *yajaman* is hereditary. Its permanency is unaffected by any arrangement that may be made for its suspension for reasons of convenience. In such circumstances the *kula-gor* (priest of the lineage) may officiate at only such important occasions as initiation and marriage. If a priest dies without leaving a son, or any closely related agnate, behind him, the right to serve his clientele may be inherited by his daughter's son.

On every occasion that he provides his services to a client-household, the priest receives a fee (*dakhshina*) in cash or kind, or both. The amount of the fee varies with the economic status of each household and the importance of each occasion. In rural areas such fees are nominal, but a priest receives from all land-

owning households a certain quantity of paddy at harvest time. He also gets all the money which the boys of his client-households receive from their kith and kin on the occasion of their initiation. The priests are thus economically dependent upon their *yajaman,* who include priests also as even a priestly household need on certain occasions the services of a specialist which a member of the household itself does not customarily provide.

Status and Territorial Distinctions Among the 'Karkun'

The *karkun* are highly status conscious. The sense of status primarily arises out of the freedom from economic want and consequently from the need to engage in manual labour; it is sustained by territorial distinctions as also by minor differences of pronunciation and custom.

The hall-mark of an aristocratic Pandit family is that none of its living male members or ancestors has ever engaged in manual labour. In the countryside this attitude towards manual labour can be assumed only by the well-to-do landed families or by traders, as there are not many other respectable occupations. It is not uncommon for a petty Pandit landowner to choose poverty and share the crop with a tenant, rather than cultivate the land himself. However, there are many who cultivate their own land, become tenants to other Pandits, or migrate to the city of Srinagar as cooks and domestic servants.

In Srinagar the contempt for manual labour is more general, and this for three reasons: Firstly, appointment to government services has been, as it were, the prerogative of Pandits, so much so that it has been accepted as their traditional occupation for census purposes (see Ram and Raina, Vol. XXIV, Pt. 2, 1933). A high percentage of literacy and the fact of their being Hindus have been responsible for their privileged position. Lawrence (1895, p. 282) mentions 'the pen' (*kalam*) as the major source of the Pandits' income. Huxley, who visited Kashmir about 35 years ago wrote thus: 'The Kashmiri Pandit has a more than Spanish objection to manual labour. But, unlike the hidalgo who thought himself dishonoured by the exercise of any profession save that of arms, the pandit is ambitious of

wielding only the pen. He may be abjectly poor . . . but he does only a pandit's work' (1926, p. 30).[5]

Secondly, menial and domestic service is provided to the city-dwelling Pandits by rural Pandits who, driven by economic need, do not mind engaging in manual labour away from their own homes.

And thirdly, there is, of course, no cultivation of land in the city except by vegetable gardeners who are invariably Muslims.

The city-dwelling Pandits regard themselves as superior to their rural brethren with whom manual labour (cultivation of land and domestic service) is associated. Salaried jobs are the main source of income for urban Pandits, with trade and ownership of land in villages (absentee landlordism) coming second and third. In the villages the position has been the reverse until the very recent past. Even now, after the introduction of drastic land reforms, salaried jobs are only beginning to approach the position of agriculture (ownership and cultivation of land) as the main source of income.

Another striking difference lies in the fact that, not only is literacy more widespread in Srinagar than in the villages, but college education and technical training (in engineering, medicine etc.) also have been practically confined to the urban Pandits. In the countryside female literacy is almost absent whereas in the city many women students attend schools and colleges and even go out of Kashmir for higher education. Colleges of the intermediate level and higher secondary schools have been, however, opened in several towns in the last decade, and an increasing number of villagers, though only men, attend these and the Srinagar colleges.

Differences of pronunciation, though minor, also have served to distinguish the villager from the city dweller. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Srinagar Pandits traditionally have regarded themselves as being culturally and intellectually superior to their brethren living in the villages.

The city women have greatly improved their position, and there are fewer restrictions of social intercourse on a woman in

[5] Cf. 'Economic activity is poorly developed in the pre-industrial city, for manual labour, or indeed any that requires one to mingle with humbler folk, is deprecated and eschewed by the elite' (Sjoberg 1960, p. 325).

Srinagar than in the villages. Symbolizing the gradual emancipation of Pandit womanhood in Srinagar is the almost complete change over to the *sari* from the traditional costume of Pandit women which is still much used in the villages (see plate no. X). The *sari* has now reached the villages too (see plate no. XII). The Pandit villagers frankly admit that they always copy new trends and fashions originating in the city. Widow re-marriage also started in Srinagar, but interestingly enough it now seems to be more widely practised in the villages than in the city.

The hold of religion and adherence to traditional rituals and taboos is as yet very much stronger in the villages than in Srinagar. Thus, no Pandit villager would ever take food cooked by Muslims, at least not openly. In Srinagar many young Pandits who attend college or work in offices often eat and drink at Muslim restaurants and make no secret of it.

In the domain of family life, the ideal pattern of interpersonal relations is probably considerably similar. All the main rituals and ceremonies associated with kinship are the same. However, there are some major differences. Thus the practice of marriage by exchange is infrequent among the city-dwelling Pandits, who also tend to limit the circulation of their women in marital alliances to Srinagar.

Rural-urban distinctions have become the basis of status differentiation and have given rise to restrictions on free intermarriage. The city dweller will not obtain a spouse for a son or a daughter, or himself, from a village unless he is driven by circumstances (poverty, advanced age, some physical defect, widowerhood etc.) to do so ; but even then he will try to seek a match from a family of about the same or higher economic status as his own. What is significant is that the status assumed by the urban Pandits is implicitly accepted by the villagers who favour the establishment of suitable marital alliances in the city. Nevertheless, the rural Pandits also express their disapproval of the modernized city dweller whom they regard as morally weak, arrogant, selfish and irreligious.

It may here be added that the *gor*, though found in both rural and urban areas, are not divided into classes. There are two probable explanations for the absence of social differentia-

tion among the priests: first, all of them follow one common occupation; and second, they are few in numbers and, therefore, intermarriage between the rural and the urban *gor* is often unavoidable in view of the fact that known kin do not intermarry.

Kinship and Marriage Among the Pandits

Division into the two subcastes of *karkun* and *gor,* and occupational, economic and territorial differentiation among the former, are important structural features of Pandit society, but they alone do not bestow upon it its distinctive character. The primary determinants of interpersonal relations among the Pandits of rural Kashmir are kinship and affinity, and these ties crystallize most sharply in their domestic organization.

Functionally the most important group in Pandit society is the domestic group called the *gara* (household) or *chulah* (hearth group). It is small in size and rarely consists of more than a dozen persons. Familial in character, it usually includes primary and secondary kin and their spouses, and has a two-to-three generation depth. It may be a nuclear or an extended family, and besides, may include other kin or affines. Based upon patrivirilocal residence, it is the primary unit of production and consumption, responsible for the socialization of children and the performance of the rituals of kinship (see Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).

A *chulah* rarely stands by itself in a village. It is usually embedded, as it were, in a wider grouping of domestic groups called the *kotamb* (family). The *kotamb* is usually a large, extended family and may include kin who are genealogically separated by several degrees of collaterality.

The link between the constituent domestic groups—i.e. the basis of the internal order of the *kotamb*—is provided by the notion of agnatic descent. The backbone or the structural core of the *kotamb* is the *kol* (patrilineage). The *kol,* however, does not emerge as an existential lineage group; it never acts as such, independent of the *kotamb* and the domestic groups. It is rather conceived of as a category of kin who are divided into several *kotamb*. Thus, although patrilineal descent is of crucial importance in Pandit society, yet it does not give rise to

unilineal descent groups. Their inferior jural and ritual status notwithstanding, the wives are active and influential members of the family and the domestic group.

The *kotamb* is a local group and includes all the agnates and their spouses resident in a village. They usually reside in a number of houses in one compound or several contiguous compounds. Occasional cases of patriuxorilocal marriage or migration result in the dispersal of families; consequently a domestic group may be formed in a village where its male members do not have any ties of agnation outside their own *chulah*. In course of time this domestic group may grow into another *kotamb* of the same *kol* (see Chapter 9).

The domestic group and the family are the groups within which a Pandit plays his or her diverse kinship and affinal roles. In consequence of the prevailing mode of residence, a woman is in the course of her life-time linked to two sets of domestic groups and families, her father's and her husband's. The *chulah* is an area of person-to-person relations, whereas within the *kotamb* the emphasis is rather upon inter(domestic)-group relations. Within the *chulah* co-operation overrides conflict which develops gradually between brothers till the group breaks up (see Chapter 8). Hostility between cousins (*piteruth*) is socially recognised as inevitable and provides a recurrent theme, as it were, for 'family dramas'. But coresidence in the same village prevents the kind of break-up in the *kotamb* which is the climax of inter-*chulah* tensions. Thus, as the genealogical connection becomes remoter, and common interests diminish, territorial proximity attains increasing significance; but for it there would probably be no *kotamb* and kinsmen would rather invoke lineage ties to order their interrelations (see Chapter 9).

Membership of the same *kol* has a two-fold significance. Positively, it stresses the overriding emphasis upon ties of agnation. Even when interaction has ceased, ties of agnatic kinship persist in a manner which is not true of the bonds of non-agnatic kinship and affinity. In behavioural terms this loyalty to the lineage is expressed in the rule of *kol* exogamy and the *tarpan* and *shraddha* rites at which a man offers oblations to his male ancestors upto the sixth ascendant generation (inclusive). Negatively, when *kol* ties, rather than *kotamb*

ties, are appealed to, the intention may well be to stress the lack of genealogical proximity (see Chapters 6 and 9).

Non-agnatic kinship is not the basis of group formation in Pandit society. A person is bound by material and non-material rights and obligations and by sentiments to his or her non-agnatic cognates but has no interests in common with them. Among them one has particularly close relations with one's mother's natal family which is called the *matamal* (see Chapter 10).

Opposed to kinship (consanguinity) are the ties of affinity. For a man his *howur* (wife's natal family) remains for ever in the category of non-kin, even after the birth of his children who are their cognates. But for a woman, who lives the adult (longer and active) part of her life in her husband's household, her conjugal family (*variw*) is also her family of procreation. It is here that she becomes a mother, a mother-in-law, a grandmother, and may be a great-grandmother. And when she dies she receives oblations from her sons. Most of her ritual and jural ties with her own agnates become extinguished when she leaves her natal family 'to enter', as the saying goes, 'her own home' (see Chapters 6, 8 and 9).

3

Utrassu-Umanagri

I

THE VILLAGES OF KASHMIR

THE VALLEY of Kashmir[1] is a basin, 85 miles long and 25 miles broad, with an area of 6,131 square miles and an average altitude of 6,000 feet above sea level. It is surrounded on all sides by mountains which rise up to 18,000 feet. Its climate is of the 'intermediate' type (see Spate 1954, p. 365). Linguistically and culturally too Kashmir is quite distinct from the surrounding areas.

The geographical and cultural isolation of Kashmir has never been absolute. Communications with the world outside have been, in the past, made possible by several mountain passes. In more recent times modern means of transport and communication have brought the Valley into much closer contact with India and the rest of the world. Political conquest, migration and cultural expansion, directed towards and from Kashmir, are characteristic features of its known history.

Kashmir is a predominantly agricultural country: 79 per cent of its inhabitants (1,501,417 out of 1,899,438) live in villages (see *Census of India, Paper No. 1 of 1963: 1961 Census—Religion*, pp. 14f.), which are found not only in the Valley but also high up in the mountains. Lawrence describes the rural landscape thus:

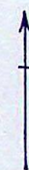
> As one descends the mountains and leaves the woodland glades, cultivation commences immediately, and right up to

[1] The native term for the Valley is Kasheer which is, according to Aurel Stein, the direct phonetic derivative of the Sanskrit Kashmir (*Kāśmīra*). Of the several meanings of the word, 'rock trough' (*kāś*=channel, *mīra*=mountain) is one (see Sufi 1949, I, pp. 12f.). The Kashmiri calls himself and his language by the common term '*koshur*'.

THE SETTLEMENT MAP OF VILLAGE

UTRASSU – UMANAGRI

0 1/4 1/2
MILE



RIVER ARAPATH

UTRASSU

UMANAGRI

- ⋯⋯ Village Boundary
- R Revenue Record Office
- P Panchayat
- P.O. Post Office
- F Govt. Foodgrain Store
- S School
- D Dispensary
- Pandit Shrine
- ■ Pandit Homestead
- M Muslim Homestead & Neighbourhood
- □ Shop
- ✡ Watermill
- 0 Public Bathroom
- Δ Mosque
- + Cremation Ground
- ⊙ Graveyard
- ═ Inter-Village Track
- ━ Village Track
- ---- Footpath
- Stream, Spring
- ═ Paddy Field
- ||| Wheat & Maize Field
- ⁞⁞⁞ Maize Field
- ⁚ ⁚ Forest
- ⁚ ⁚ Forest under clearing

H.E.G.

> the fringe of forests maize is grown and walnut-trees abound. A little lower down, at an elevation of about 7,000 feet, rice of a hardy and stunted growth is found, and the shady plane-tree appears. Lower still superior rices are grown, and the water courses are edged with willows. The side valleys which lead off from the vale of Kashmir, though possessing distinctive charms of their own, have certain features in common. At the mouth of the valley lies the wide delta of fertile soil on which the rice with its varying colours, the plane-trees, mulberries and willows grow luxuriantly; a little higher up the land is terraced and rice still grows, and the slopes are ablaze with the wild indigo, till at about 6,000 feet the plane-tree gives place to the walnut, and rice to millets. On the left bank of the mountain rivers endless forests stretch from the bottom of the valley to the peaks; and on the right bank, wherever a nook or corner is sheltered from the sun and hot breezes of India, the pines and firs establish themselves. Further up the valey, the river, already a roaring torrent, becomes a veritable waterfall dashing down between lofty cliffs whose bases are fringed with maples and horse-chestnuts, white and pink, and millets are replaced by buckwheat and Tibetan barley. Soon after this the useful birch tree appears, and then come grass and glaciers, the country of the shepherds (1909, pp. 5f.).

About the Kashmiri vallage, Lawrence writes:

> Shaded by the unrivalled plane-tree, by walnut, apple and apricot, watered by a clear sparkling stream, the grass banks of which are streaked with the coral red of the willow rootlets, surrounded by the tender green of the young rice, or the dark handsome fields of the Imbrazal and other rices of the black leaf, the Kashmir village is rich in natural beauties . . . (1895, p. 248).

The Kashmiri village is comprised of a number of homesteads and the surrounding land and pastures. Village boundaries are based upon local usage and recognized by the government. Periodical adjustments are made wherever necessary. Every village has a name. According to Baden-Powel (1896, p. 60),

the Mughals seem to have introduced the village system into Kashmir in the seventeenth century. Joint responsibility in certain matters, such as payment of land revenue, was instituted by Todar Mal during the rule of Akbar (1556-1605), and continued to be in force till the justly famous Settlement by Lawrence in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. He wrote: '. . . if it be necessary to apply Indian terms to Kashmiri tenures, perhaps ruined raiyatwari will be the most appropriate description of the plastic system of Kashmir. Before the Mughal times I believe that a pure raiyatwari system existed, . . .' (1895, p. 426).

The Kashmiri village today is of the 'severalty' type;[2] the ownership is in the form of independent holdings and the village as a whole is not a corporation. The ownership of forests, pastures, pathways, watercourses, burial and cremation grounds, etc. vests in the State but the villagers have well-defined rights of usufruct. In size it varies from a hamlet of a few homesteads and fewer than a hundred persons to large villages of two to three thousand people. The average strength, according to the 1931 census (Vol. XXIV, Pt. 2) was approximately 356. The smaller villages are generally nucleated; the larger ones may be dispersed or bi-nucleated. I was not able to record any instances of multi-clustered villages. The sections of a bi-nucleated village are called *pati,* meaning section or major division.

From the physical point of view, a side (or sub)-valley comprises all the villages lying in a basin. One such side valley is Kothar in the Anantnag District;[3] and one of the bigger bi-nucleated villages in this valley is designated as Utrassu-Umanagri in official records. It is locally called by the name

[2] Baden-Powell (1899, p. 19) has listed the main features of the 'severalty' village and contrasted it with the 'joint' village. In his earlier work (1896, p. 18f.) he employs the term 'raiyatwari' in place of 'severalty'.

[3] For purposes of administration and revenue collection, Kashmir is divided into three districts; Baramula district in the north-west, Srinagar district in the middle, and Anantnag district in the south-east. The Anantnag district is the most populous of the three (population in 1961 : 654,368) with a density of 315 persons per square mile. The districts are further divided into *tehsils,* each *tehsil* being comprised of several villages and, in some cases, towns (see map on page 5).

of Votaros-Brariangan, and the *pati* of Brariangan is also called Vomai.

Utrassu-Umanagri: Location and Physical Features

Utrassu-Umanagri is situated in the shadow of a coniferous forest, about 12 miles east of the town of Anantnag (approximate position: 76°E, 33°N). Five miles south-east of Anantnag is Achchiwal, a beautiful village famous for its trout streams and the largest fresh-water spring in Kashmir. A surfaced road runs east of Achchiwal for four miles to the village of Shangas. This road links up, about 300 yards outside Shangas, with a fair-weather inter-village track which goes further north-eastwards for about ten miles. This track, covered by ankle-deep snow, mud or dust, depending upon the season, runs for about a mile before it enters Utrassu-Umanagri. A bus goes daily from Shangas to Anantnag in the morning, and returns in the evening. Several *tongas* also run on the route, but they do not proceed to Utrassu-Umanagri during the winter months. Pedestrians who want to go to the *pati* of Umanagri, and want to escape the muddy track leading to the village from Shangas, often use a bridlepath through the forest climbing up to it from the road in Shangas.

Utrassu-Umanagri is surrounded by other villages on the north, the north-east and the west. But on its eastern and southern boundaries lie, in an arc, hill slopes covered with coniferous forests. The boundaries of the village with other villages are precisely defined and demarcated, but its boundary along the forest, though demarcated in the revenue maps, is not clearly defined in usage. With part of its territory lying on the lower slope of a hill, and part in the valley below, Utrassu-Umanagri has the features of a hillside village as well as those of a village lying in a valley. The lower part of the village, lying in the valley, is flat and its soil is alluvial. It has an abundant supply of water with several streams issuing from springs and a perennial river, the Arapath, flowing through it. Consequently agriculture here is 'wet' and devoted primarily to paddy cultivation. The available water also irrigates kitchen-gardens in which vegetables are raised. Besides, there are three water mills in this part of the village.

In the upper part of the village, the soil is pebbly and all the land available for cultivation is on a slope. The available supply of water is insufficient for purposes of 'wet' agriculture. Several small mountain streams flow down the hillside much too swiftly to be drawn upon for the purpose of irrigation. Therefore, only maize, wheat and oil-seeds are cultivated in this part of the village as none of these crops need more moisture than is supplied by the yearly precipitation. The altitude of the village being only about 6,000 feet above sea level, it is possible to cultivate finer varieties of grain. But only maize of a hardy variety can be raised in the fields lying in the extreme east of the village, high above its inhabited parts. Water from small creeks enables the residents of the upper part of the village to raise vegetables in their gardens. Fruit trees also have been planted all over the village. Besides, the hillsides afford ample scope for pasturage from spring to autumn. In the severely cold winter, however, shepherds have to move down into the village with their flocks; some of them even cross the mountains to the warmer climate of the areas south and south-east of Kashmir. The proximity to forests make the summers less hot, and the winters less severe in the sheltered village of Utrassu-Umanagri than in villages out in the open.

The villagers speak of five seasons in the year. *Sonth* (spring) roughly corresponds to the months of April and May. Maize and later paddy are sown in this season, and mustard is harvested. *Retakol,* summer (June-July), is the time for harvesting wheat, raising vegetables and collecting various fruit crops such as almonds. There is not much activity in *vahrath,* the rainy season (August-September). In *harud,* autumn (October-November), maize and later paddy are harvested, and fruits from walnut and apple trees collected. Wheat and mustard are then sown; the seeds remain under the soil throughout the *vandah,* winter (December-March). No crops can be raised in the winter, and any activity in the fields and the kitchen-gardens is made impossible by cold, frost and snow. Much of the annual precipitation of 25.7 inches in Kashmir is snow, and the mean temperature for January is 30.7°F (see Lawrence 1909, pp. 20f.). Kashmiri villagers refer to *mag* (the coldest month of winter corresponding to January-February) and the concomitant

drag (expensiveness of the necessities of life) as their worst enemies.

At the existing low technological level, geographical conditions have set definite limits to the economic activities of the villagers and influenced their material culture and social life. Thus the type of house the Kashmiri builds for himself; the type of and material for clothes he wears; and his winter-long indolence, alternating with intense activity during the rest of the year, are intimately connected with the climatic and other geographical features of the typical Kashmir village.

Utrassu-Umanagri: The Settlement Pattern

According to government records the area of Utrassu-Umanagri is 12,338 *kanal* (8 *kanal*=1 acre approx.). Table I shows the uses to which this area was put in 1956-57.

TABLE I

PATTERN OF LAND USE IN UTRASSU-UMANAGRI

Type of use	*Area under each type*	*Percentage of total area*
Cultivation	10,104 *kanal*	82.0% approx.
Pasture land	1,459 „	11.5% „
Forest	495 „	4.0% „
Homesteads	163 „	1.5% „
Pathways	117 „	1.0% „
Total	12,338 *kanal*	100.0%

As already stated, Utrassu-Umanagri is a bi-nucleated village. The *pati* of Utrassu lies in the valley and Umanagri lies on the hillside above. The two *pati* are demarcated from one another by the absence of homesteads over a distance of a quarter of a mile. Wheat and maize fields, pastures and orchards lie between them. As a person enters the village, following the inter-village track from Shangas, he finds himself in

Utrassu, which is the larger of the two *pati,* both in area and population. It is prominent in some other respects also; the revenue record-keeper's office, the village school,[4] the government food-grain store, the dispensary, the *panchayat* house, and the post-office (in a grocer's shop) are all located in Utrassu. Also, it is in Utrassu that most of the village shops (18 out of 28), all the four flour mills (three of these are water mills and one is operated on a diesel motor) are situated.

The inhabited part of Utrassu is situated alongside and to the east of the inter-village track running through this *pati.* It is comprised of 302 homesteads out of the total of 431 in the village. The houses of patrilineal kin tend to cluster together around a common yard or in contiguous yards. Every cluster of homesteads, whether of related and/or unrelated households, which constitutes a distinct grouping in a village is known as a *pur.* It may be named after the family name of the households living in it or predominating among its inhabitants, or after some natural feature, such as its location. Thus *koula-pur* in Utrassu is named after the family name 'Koul' of the households living in it; and the *manzim*(middle)-*pur* in Umanagri is named after its location.

There are 23 such *pur* in Utrassu. The shops are mostly situated on either side of the inter-village track, but some are further inside the *pati.* The mills are located on the banks of the Arapath. The school and the revenue record-keeper's office are situated within the area of habitation, but the dispensary, the grain store and the *panchayat* house lie on the uninhabited side of the inter-village track. Also found in this *pati* are burial and cremation grounds (for Muslims and Hindus respectively), a *hamam* (Muslim public bathrooms), a mosque, a Hindu shrine and some grazing land.

[4] The village school was started by the Government in 1912, and was made a High School in 1954. Students who pass a ten-year course receive the School Leaving Certificate. Another two years' study at an intermediate college (in Anantnag or elsewhere) is required before a person may enter a degree college. Only about half a dozen persons of Utrassu-Umanagri have done this in the past. In 1957 there were 16 teachers and about 300 pupils at the school. The pupils drawn from Utrassu-Umanagri and the surrounding villages included four girls in the primary section.

About 500 feet above Utrassu is the site of the main habitation in the *pati* of Umanagri. Excluding the huts and houses of the shepherds situated in the forest and on the outskirts of the main habitation, Umanagri is the smaller and the more compact of the two *pati*. Sixty-six houses, spread over six *pur*, and shops situated on either side of the village footpaths are the main buildings in this *pati*. There are also a mosque, a *hamam*, and a shrine in which are preserved some of the personal belongings of the Hindu *sanyasi* who founded the *pati* and of some of his successors. In 1957 a water tank for cattle was constructed on pasture land.

The two *pati* are interdependent. Apart from ties of affinity and kinship between various households in the village, some domestic groups in Umanagri own land in Utrassu, but no one in Utrassu owns land in Umanagri. Some of the village artisans (e.g. oil-pressers, cobblers, washermen, basket-weavers and blanket-weavers) are found only in Utrassu, and others (e.g. blacksmiths and potters) are found only in Umanagri. As already stated, the flour mills, the post office, the dispensary and the school are situated in Utrassu. Moreover, the better stocked grocery shops are also those of Utrassu, and there is no butcher's shop in Umanagri. Considering further the fact that the residents of Umanagri generally pass through Utrassu while going to other villages, it becomes apparent why the former feel dependent upon Utrassu and are more familiar with the happenings there.

The dependence of the inhabitants of Umanagri on Utrassu was greater in the past than it is now ; it will gradually become less as Umanagri develops and the needs of its inhabitants are met with more fully within the *pati* itself. With the passage of time the two *pati* will, in all probability, emerge as two independent villages. At present, there is no internal boundary in the village and it is not with any certainty that one can say where one *pati* ends and the other begins. The sites of the two habitations are, however, distinctly apart, and therefore it is not difficult to say which *pati* a homestead belongs to, although it is not equally easy to say which of the pastures and fields in between the two *pati* lie in Umanagri and which in Utrassu.

Utrassu-Umanagri : Legend and History

Utrassu is the older of the two *pati* of the village, although it is difficult to say how old it is. The maximum depth of the genealogies of the Pandit families of Utrassu is nine generations. There is other evidence to suggest that the present *pati* is at least 200 to 250 years old ; one of the tombstones in the graveyard bears a date of the Muslim calendar in the year 1173 Hijri, corresponding to A.D. 1749-50. Stein (1961, Vol. II, BK. VIII, p. 468) has identified Utrassu as the village of Utrasa mentioned by Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini* (BK. VII, verse 1254), a twelfth century Sanskrit chronicle. This would mean that Utrassu is more than 800 years old.

The beginnings of Umanagri are comparatively recent. The villagers say that about 180 to 200 years ago a Pandit from Srinagar, Shiv Ram Jalali by name, had a revelation and consequently renounced the world to become a *sanyasi*. He took up his abode in the forest above Utrassu at Vomai (Uma's abode), near the three springs sacred to the Hindu goddess Uma, her divine consort Shiva, and the supreme god Vishnu. Some villagers told me that Utrassu is a corrupt form of *Uttervasah* (*Ut*=there+*ter*=three+*vasah*=live, or *Utter*=northerly+*vasah*=abode). Both these derivations depend upon the existence of the three sacred springs.

Shiv Ram used to spend much of his time in meditation, taking only one meal a day, which a Brahman household in Utrassu brought to him. These were the days of Afghan rule in Kashmir. It is said that one day a Muslim dignitary of the court of the Afghan viceroy paid a visit to Utrassu and went up into the forest where he saw Shiv Ram sitting in meditation. Since the *sanyasi* did not rise to show respect to the Muslim dignitary, the latter drew his sword in anger but stopped suddenly and did not kill him. One version of the legend is that he had a terrifying vision of the Goddess Uma in anger ; according to another version, he saw a cat, sitting by the *sanyasi's* side, transform itself into a ferocious lion. (The lion is Uma's mount and attendant.) It was thus that this place came to be known as Brariangan (the cat's compound). There are others who maintain that Brariangan is a corrupt form of

Bhairavi-angan, i.e. Bhairavi's compound. Bhairavi is another name of Uma. Whatever might have happened, village records show that the Government of Haji Karam Dad granted 1,600 *kanal* (about 2,00 acres) of revenue-free land as *inam* (reward) to the *sanyasi* with effect from Baisakh 1, 1838 Bikrami (April 13, 1781).

Shiv Ram's coming into this estate created for him the need of having an heir. After a search a suitable boy was found in the village of Kilam and brought to the hermitage. He was named Ramanand, and succeeded to the estate with the title of *mahant* (manager of an estate held in the name of a divine being). Ramanand also did not marry, but his married brother, Dila Ram Marhatta, came with his family and took up residence in the Raipur *pati* of the village. This *pati* has since been abandoned owing to scarcity of water.

The earliest household to take up residence in Umanagri itself was that of a religious-minded man, Lamboodar Kala, who immigrated from Srinagar about 140 years ago, having first visited Umanagri as a pilgrim. He was followed, in A.D. 1853, by the family of Narayan Pandit, who also had received a grant of 240 acres of rent-free land, adjacent to the *mahant's* land, in recognition of his scholarship and as remuneration for his daily recitation of sacred hymns at the site of the holy springs. Subsequently nine more families migrated into Umanagri. None of these came from Utrassu, but when the *pati* of Raipur was abandoned about 60 years ago, one household came from there. No more Pandits have migrated into Umanagri since then. It seems that the later migrants came into Umanagri for purely mundane reasons as forest-cleared land belonging to the State was available for cultivation ; further, as the *mahant's* nominal servants, the settlers could avoid conscription by the Government for labour gangs.

To begin with, the settlers in Umanagri were so dependent for their food and various services upon Utrassu that, instead of emerging as an independent hamlet, Umanagri became attached to Utrassu through the frequency and intimacy of contacts between the people inhabiting the two areas. Umanagri was later recorded as a *pati* within Utrassu at the time of the Settlement Survey late in the nineteenth century. Its early

settlers were only Pandits, but they encouraged their Muslim tenants to bring their families to reside in the *pati*. Some families of Muslim shepherds came still later from outside Kashmir; they have by now become part and parcel of the village and its affairs.

II

The Villagers

In 1957 there were 2,644 persons in residence in Utrassu-Umanagri. Of these 2,122, or about 80 per cent, were Muslims and the remaining 522 Pandits.

The Muslims

The Muslims of the village are divided into two cultural sub-groups: 1,352, or about 64 per cent of them, are natives and the remaining 770 recent immigrants. The natives are known as the Sheikh—a term used all over the Indian sub-continent to designate Muslims descended from Hindu converts (see Gait 1911 and *Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary*). The Hindu ancestry of the Kashmiri Sheikh Muslims and their present day involvement—economic, social and cultural—with the Pandits in rural Kashmir have been described by several observers (see, e.g. Lawrence 1895, pp. 306ff. and 1909, pp. 35ff., and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed., Vol. XV, p. 688), but will not be discussed in this book (see below, Chap. 11).

The Sheikh engage in a variety of economic pursuits. The majority of them are agriculturists—landless tenants or peasant-proprietors. They are also the village artisans and 'specialists': barbers, blacksmiths, cobblers, carpenters, oil-pressers, potters, *tonga*-drivers, washermen, weavers etc. None of the foregoing services are available from the Pandits and the immigrant Muslims.

These immigrants consist of two pastoral groups who arrived in the village about 60 to 75 years ago. The Gujar (literally, cowherds) came earlier than the Bakarwal (literally,

goatherds). Both these groups hailed from the then North-West Frontier Province. They are ethnically, linguistically and culturally distinct from the Sheikh. Most of the herdsmen live in houses on the outskirts of the habitation in Umanagri, or in stone-and-mud huts in the forests above. Some of the Gujar have intermarried with the Sheikh, adopted some articles of their dress and settled down to agriculture. The Bakarwal continue to value endogamy; they may intermarry with the Gujar but not with the Sheikh. They still depend predominantly on the herding of cattle, sheep and goats for their source of livelihood. These herdsmen are semi-nomadic: they move in and out of the village with their flocks, seeking the heights of mountain pastures in summer and returning in autumn before the winter's frosts and snow arrive.

The Pandits

Of the 522 Pandits of the village 214 live in Utrassu and 308 in Umanagri. All of them are *karkun* engaged in secular occupations. There is one Umanagri family which boasts of many famous Sanskrit scholars (*pandit*) and astrologers (*jyotishi*) including Narayan Pandit (see above, p. 39) among its ancestors, but today only two of its male members can lay any claim to traditional scholarship. The absence of priests is made good by the five *gor* households of the adjoining village of Kreri, which has a total Pandit population of 70. Since the ancestors of all the Umanagri Pandit families migrated into the village from elsewhere, their relations with the Kreri priests must have originated in the kind of arrangements of convenience referred to in the previous chapter. There is, however, only one family of four households in Umanagri who are even now visited by their *kola-gor* who belongs to the city of Srinagar. These households are those of the present *mahant* and the descendants of a previous *mahant*.

The Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri are divided into 22 *kotamb* or families, each family consisting of one or more households of patrilineally related kinsmen, their unmarried female agnates and wives. There are 87 households in all. Though agnatically unrelated, only five of these families do not have affinal or cognatic ties with any other Pandit family in the village. All

the rest have such ties with at least one family, but in no case with more than six.

Although the subcaste of priests is absent, a 'class' division exists among the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri. Economic inequality seems to be the basic factor that underlies this division. The landowners have been the village aristocracy, and it has been customary to refer to them as 'the big men' (*bad mohniv*). They consist of the descendants of the first *mahant* and of a group of households whose migrant ancestors either received rent-free land from the Government, or accumulated considerable wealth through trade and bought large landed estates. By contrast, the rest of the Pandits have been peasant-proprietors, tenants with or without their own land, shopkeepers, petty government employees and domestic servants. The Pandits of the landed class have never cultivated their own lands; their holdings have been large and dispersed, and they have been able to afford parting with part of the land produce to give it to the cultivating tenants. They have been prosperous enough to afford a higher standard of living, costly possessions and pilgrimages to various holy places outside Kashmir. None of them has ever worked as a menial (cook or a domestic servant). They have also avoided some of the marriage practices associated with the 'commoners'. Thus, there are no cases of marriage by the exchange of women among them; and the cases of marriage involving a payment, in cash and/or kind, by the bridegroom to the bride's kin are so rare as to be exceptional. Although members of the landed aristocracy have taken wives from the 'commoner' families, they have not generally married their daughters into such families. They have also produced the scholars and astrologers of past times; and the only literate woman in the village belongs to an upper class family. The landed families have also been the champions of traditional usage and custom. Thus, although they have given their support to widow remarriage among the Pandits generally, they have not so far allowed this practice to occur in any of their own families. They have also shown reluctance in accepting marriages between Pandits and non-Pandit Brahmans as proper, but three such marriages have taken place among the 'commoners'. As a consequence of the above-mentioned differ-

ences, the landlords have developed a sense of class superiority. The oldest village landlord, Tarachand Pandit, said to me on one occasion: 'Only those who themselves are low will ever desire the mingling of the high and the low.'

Differences between the 'class' attitudes emerge clearly on such occasions as bring all the Pandits together. To give an illustration: A 'commoner' Pandit celebrated the marriage of his daughter while I was in the village. When the bridegroom's party was due to arrive in the village, adult men from nearly all the Pandit families gathered at the bride's father's house to welcome the visitors. Some of the Pandits returned to their homes after the visitors had been welcomed on their arrival, but most of them, particularly the 'commoners', stayed on for lunch. When lunch was announced, several of these 'commoners' volunteered to bring the food from the kitchen and serve it to the guests, whereas 'the big men' remained seated, smoking the *hookah* and exchanging gossip. Some of them gave directions as to how the guests should be seated and the food served. It is commonly said about the landed aristocracy that a generation ago even their children expected the 'commoner' Pandits to fold hands in obeisance to them. This division has not, however, developed into a class antagonism. Many of the Pandits, in fact, deny that there are divisions amongst them, but accuse 'the big men' of being selfish and haughty. However, as an outsider observes it, the 'class' division seems real. Of the 87 Pandit households resident in the village, 17 belong to the landed aristocracy; among the rest, about a dozen have acquired wealth, and land in some cases, and aspire to be regarded as superior to the common people who constitute the bulk of the Pandit population. The aristocrats point out that the newly rich families do not have distinguished ancestry; besides, there are many cases of marriage by exchange in their genealogies.

Correlated with the 'class' division is the absence of a strongly developed sense of solidarity among the Pandits. They themselves complain about this, bewailing the absence of leaders who could win the confidence and respect of all of them. Economic interdependence among the Pandits is not great. Their religion is of the personal type, with only a weakly developed collective aspect; there are no collective rituals among them requiring

the participation of all or most of them. Two-yearly feasts, one in honour of the patron goddess of the village and the other in commemoration of its founder, are the only occasions when a great number (but not all) of the Pandits of the village come together. Various institutions like marriages and funeral feasts associated with Pandit kinship are, to employ Nadel's terms, 'parallel' rather than 'associative (see Nadel 1951, pp. 120f.); they focus attention on the divisions which exist between kin and non-kin in the village.

An instance of the lack of solidarity among the Pandits may be seen in their attitude to the recent political and economic changes in the State. These changes have had, among other consequences, the effect of endangering the economic solvency of the Pandits. All households that owned more than 23 acres have lost the land exceeding that limit to their tenants; the tenant's share in agricultural produce has been raised, benefitting the Muslims more than the Pandits, because not many Pandits have been tenants; and government jobs have been thrown open to the Muslims on a favoured treatment basis. In the face of the rising economic and political power of the Muslims, it might have been expected that the Pandits would evolve a common approach to their relations with the Muslims; but they have not. They are divided into two opinion groups; those who want to co-operate with the Muslims and work for a united village community, and those who want to seek protection from the Government as a religious minority. They are an unorganized leaderless group, proud of their past, confused about their present, and uncertain of their future.

4

The Homestead and the Household

I

The Homestead

By its very definition the household presupposes a house, and the Pandits use the same term *gara* to designate both. There are, in fact, four terms in use: *jay* (accommodation) for the homestead; *lar* for the house; *gara* for the house, in the specific sense of home, and also the household; and *chulah* for the household.[1]

A Pandit homestead consists of a house with a yard and a kitchen-garden and, in most cases, one or more outbuildings. These are much smaller than the house, and architecturally as well as functionally different from it and each other. An outbuilding may be a cattleshed, a granary, a shop, or a shop and granary combined.

[1] Household and *chulah* are used as synonyms throughout this book. *Chulah* is a Hindi word known all over north India. Literally, it means 'the hearth', but is also used to designate the hearth-group or household. Cf. 'All (members of the family) eat from the same hearth—a distinguishing feature recognized by the people themselves, who refer to this family unit or household as the chula (cooking hearth)' (Berreman 1963, p. 144).

The practice of equating the domestic family with the hearth seems to be both ancient and widespread. Fustel de Coulanges writes: 'The ancient Greek language has a very significant word to designate a family. It is *epistion,* a word which signifies, literally, *that which is near a hearth.* A family was a group of persons whom religion permitted to invoke the same sacred fire, and to offer the funeral repast to the same ancestors' (n.d., p. 42).

Similarly among the North Burma Kachins 'a localized patrilineage is known as a *dap* (hearth), i.e. the persons born and raised in one section of one house' (Leach 1961b, p. 14). In southern China also it seems that the household is called 'the hearth' (see Yueh-Hwa 1947, p. 125). In Africa the Nuer *gol* denotes hearth, family and home (see Evans-Pritchard 1951).

There are 59 Pandit homesteads in Utrassu-Umanagri; 42 of these consist of houses with gardens, yards and one or more outbuildings, and 17 of houses with gardens and yards only. No household is, however, without the use of a granary as several *chulahs* living in adjoining homesteads often share one; and in some cases they also share a cattleshed which is attached to one of the houses. Besides, there are in almost all houses large wooden boxes and clay jars in which grain is stored. In many houses cattle are tethered in one of the rooms on the ground floor, and there are a few instances of shops located inside the house. The Pandits say that formerly, when there were no shops, granaries were the only annexes of a messuage; cattle were always kept in the yard in summer and inside the house during cold weather. But in the last 50 to 75 years outbuildings have been built for use both as cattlesheds and shops.

Architecture of the Homestead

Of the 59 Pandit houses in Utrassu-Umanagri, 55 are three-storeyed, two four-storeyed and two two-storeyed. The height of a house is expressed in terms of *pore* (storeys) and its breadth in terms of *takh* (windows of the middle floor in the façade). Two of the 59 houses have four *takh*, 36 have five, two have six, 13 have seven, four have nine, and two have 15. The three-storeyed building with five *takh* is thus the commonest type of Pandit house in Utrassu-Umanagri and, in fact, all over Kashmir. Although the size varies from case to case, a house which is about 20 feet long, 25 feet broad and 40 feet high may be regarded as representative.

The first storey on the ground floor is usually raised from the ground by a plinth of two to three feet, and a person has to ascend several steps to enter the house by a doorway in the middle of the façade. This doorway leads into a long narrow passage called the *wuz*. Footwear is removed and left in the *wuz* before anyone enters the rooms, which are swept clean, at least once daily, and covered with straw mats. On cold and wet days clothes may be washed, utensils cleaned and a child given his bath in the *wuz*. Here also boys at the time of their ritual initiation, and young men and women at the time of their marriage, receive their ritual bath. Again it is here that the dead body

of a member of the household is ritually washed prior to cremation.

If only one household is resident in a house, then one of the main rooms on the ground floor is used both as kitchen and sitting-room, and the other as a store room. Or cattle may be tethered in one of the ground floor rooms by the residing household, or a non-residing *chulah* owning part of the house. If more than one household lives in the house, then both the rooms are used as kitchen-cum-sitting rooms. The kitchen is separated from the rest of the sitting room by a wooden or brick partition with a door in it. Adjacent to the kitchen is the bath room. The fire on which food is cooked also helps to warm the water in a large vat set in the wall between the kitchen and the bathroom (see Figure I).

Pandit women spend a great part of their time in the kitchen engaged in cooking and allied chores. When not otherwise employed, the men sit in the room adjoining the kitchen smoking their *hookah*. The women join them there when free and when there are no strangers present. All meals are eaten in this room. Some members of the family may sleep in it during winter, as the kitchen fire keeps it warm, or whenever there is shortage of space in the bedrooms on the middle floor.

A staircase of about a dozen steps at the end of the passage leads to the second storey *wuz*, from which doors open into four or five rooms. One of these rooms called the *thokur-kuth* (God's room) is usually set apart for religious rites and worship. The others are bedrooms, generally three in number, two small and one large. Not more than one married couple and their infant children sleep in a room. An aged couple who do not sleep in the same bed may, however, share their room with other unmarried adults. All the belongings of a household, including bedding, clothing, feminine ornaments, and bric-à-brac are kept in these rooms. The Pandits generally sleep on mattresses spread on mats covering the floors, but in some households cots are also used. The larger room is also used to seat and entertain guests on various important occasions such as marriages. But, if there are several households resident in a house, this room also is divided into two by erecting a permanent brick wall, or a partition of removable wooden planks, in

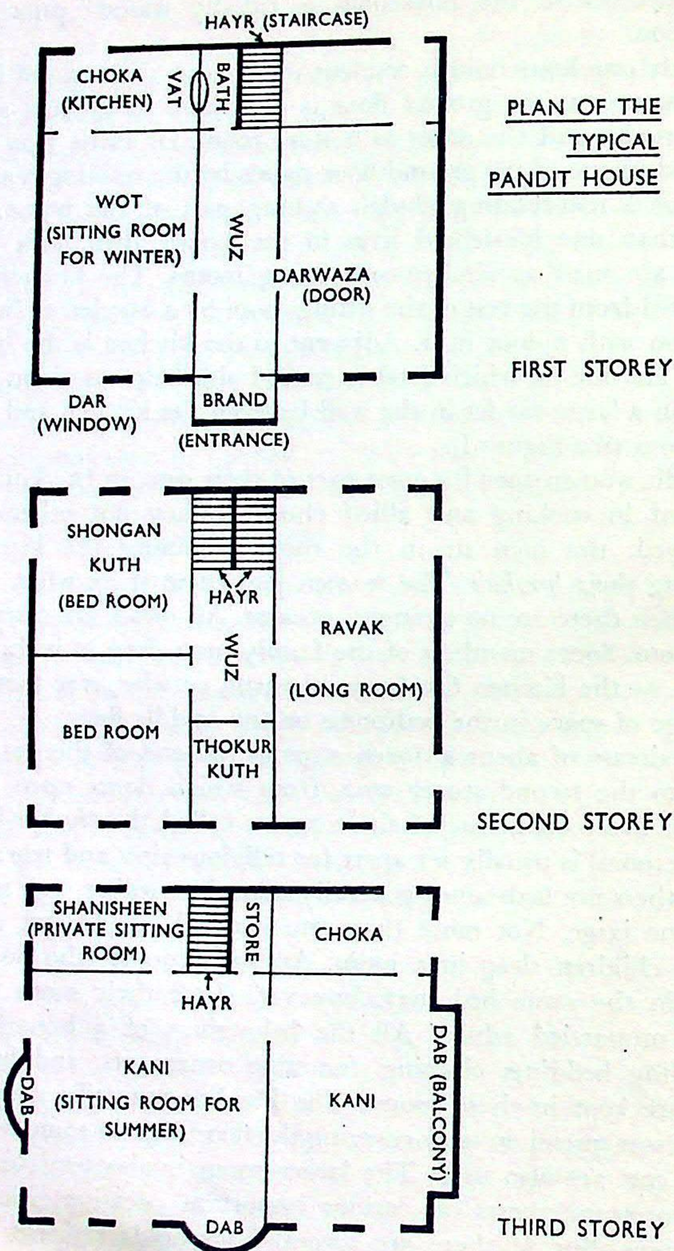

HAYR (STAIRCASE)
CHOKA
(KITCHEN)
VAT
BATH
PLAN OF THE
TYPICAL
PANDIT HOUSE
WOT
(SITTING ROOM
FOR WINTER)
WUZ
DARWAZA
(DOOR)
FIRST STOREY
DAR
(WINDOW)
BRAND
(ENTRANCE)
SHONGAN
KUTH
(BED ROOM)
HAYR
RAVAK
WUZ
(LONG ROOM)
BED ROOM
THOKUR
KUTH
SECOND STOREY
SHANISHEEN
(PRIVATE SITTING
ROOM)
STORE
CHOKA
HAYR
DAB (BALCONY)
KANI
DAB
(SITTING ROOM FOR
SUMMER)
KANI
DAB
THIRD STOREY

Fig. 1

the middle of it. In the latter case it can be easily reconverted into one large room whenever desired. In no case is any of these rooms used as a kitchen.

The third storey follows the same plan as the ground floor, and a staircase, again of about a dozen steps, leads to it from the middle floor. However, the rooms on the third floor have more windows, higher ceilings, and balconies.

A loft in which firewood, hay and straw are stored, and a ridged roof complete the house. There is a small trapdoor through which a person can climb out on the roof for various purposes. In spring fresh thatch may be spread and the roof repaired. In summer jars of pickled fruits and vegetables are placed on the roof to mature in the sun, and in autumn vegetables are dried here. In winter, whenever the snowfall is heavy, men climb out through the trapdoor to clear away accumulated snow lest its weight should damage the roof and the house.

The three-storeyed structure of the house gives good protection against the widely varying climatic conditions of Kashmir. The ground floor with low ceiling and double windows, and shielded from cold winds by neighbouring houses, is easily heated by the kitchen fire during winter. By contrast, the rooms in the third storey are kept cool and airy in summer by leaving the many windows open. Moreover, swarms of flies and mosquitos infest the yard during summer and make residence in the ground floor uncomfortable during that season. But if more than two *chulahs* live in a house, then the seasonal use of the ground and top floors by every household is not possible.

The Pandits readily connect the architecture of their homes with the climate of Kashmir. They say that houses there have been always like this, and it does not occur to them that other types of houses might meet the climatic variations as successfully. They also lay considerable stress on the auspiciousness of the number three.[2]

A homestead is referred to by the family name of the household, or agnatically related households, who live in it. The number of households in a house varies, but not more than four such groups can live at the same time in the

[2] According to Sanskritic tradition, whenever a limitation is sought to be placed on something, three is chosen as the limit (see Abbot 1932, pp. 285-294).

4

typical Pandit house with three storeys and five *takh*. Every *chulah* must have a kitchen and there are only four of them in such a house.

Every house has a yard in front of it and a garden behind it. Sometimes several houses are built adjacent to each other, and the households resident in them share the use of a yard and a garden. Paddy and maize are spread to dry in the yard before the paddy is husked and the maize separated from the cobs. Paddy is husked by women in big wooden mortars placed in the yard. In summer cattle are tethered here and cowdung is dried to be used later as fuel. Washing and cleaning of clothes and utensils are also carried on in the yard in the dry season, particularly if a stream of water flows through it. The cattleshed and the granary, and, in a few cases, a shop also, are generally situated here.

The cattleshed (*gan*) is a rectangular enclosure, with brick walls and a ridged thatch roof, capable of sheltering about a dozen cattle. A household may sometimes own ponies and sheep ; they also are kept in the cattleshed.

The granary (*kuth*), made of wooden planks joined together to form a box-like structure, is usually about nine feet long, six feet broad, and twelve feet high. Raised on four wooden supports, called 'feet', the bottom of the granary is at least a foot above ground to protect it from dampness, snow and rainwater, as also rats. It also has a ridged thatch roof. A small ladder, fixed or movable, is used for obtaining access to the grain through an opening in one side of the granary. It is usually erected a few yards away from the house as a precaution against fire. The planks are joined together by wooden and iron rivets in such a manner that it can be easily dismantled and re-erected at another place (see Plate VIII).

A shop may be built as an extension to a granary, or as a separate outbuilding. Some households have walled off a portion of one of the ground floor rooms in the dwelling house and converted it into a shop.

Construction of the House

If a Pandit household have the money to buy the requisite materials and pay for skilled and unskilled labour, a house may

be built over three summers. The top floor may remain only partially completed for many years, without window shutters, ceiling and the plastering of walls. Bishambarnath (of Utrassu) speaking to me of the partially completed third storey of his house once remarked: 'Its being incomplete adds to its value; we have more air and a better view of the natural scenery around us.'

The cost of construction of a three-storeyed five-*takh* house is about 5,000 rupees. The main materials needed for a house are bricks, stone and timber. About 30,000 bricks are required and these are made with the help of hired Muslim labour. Such of the bricks as are to be used in the outer fabric of the building are baked in a specially erected mud kiln. Timber is acquired by buying some trees in the forest; the Government sells these at a specially reduced price if intended for use in house building. Cedar, pine and fir are the most favoured timbers. Not much stone is used in construction work, as it has to be cut and shaped, and that is a costly process. Naturally shaped stones are, however, used in the underground foundations and to strengthen the ground floor. These stones are easily obtained in Utrassu-Umanagri as the mountain streams are full of them. Stones and bricks are set in brown sticky earth mixed with paddy husks. The houses of the well-to-do have ridged roofs of a thick layer of brown clay plaster spread on wooden rafters which are first covered by the very durable birch-bark (*Betula utilis*). Recently three households have built corrugated iron-sheet roofs and about as many have used wooden shingles.

Sawyers, carpenters, bricklayers and unskilled labourers are needed to build a house and all these services are bought of Muslims as only they practise these trades. Part of the unskilled labour is supplied by the members of the household, and by some of their close relatives resident in the village. In 1957 an Umanagri Pandit was having a second summer's work done to complete his house. Being an officer in the State police force, he was not able to be present in the village to supervise the work of construction. His cousin (FaBrSo) undertook the supervision of the work, although the latter belongs to a different household. For four months he spent several hours every day with the bricklayers, carpenters and the labourers working on the house.

Considering the time and money spent on building a house, it is not surprising that house building is not common. Moreover, houses are built so substantially that they last a hundred years or more without major repairs. The oldest house in the village is over 100 years old but uninhabited. The oldest inhabited house is 90 years old. In the last 20 years four new houses have been built in the village and four others rebuilt.[3]

There are two happenings which exhaust all the savings of a household and even necessitate the borrowing of money: the building of a new house and the marriage of daughters. A household decides to build a new house when its members find it very inconvenient to continue sharing a homestead with other *chulahs* and/or when their house is in a very dilapidated condition, and when they have enough money of their own to make a beginning. It is quite common for a household to borrow money to complete the construction of a new house. An unusual circumstance which necessitates repairs to a house, or its reconstruction, is damage by fire.

A household which builds a new house on a site close to its present one may continue to use or share the old granary, cattle-shed, yard and garden. It usually also retains its share in the old house, although no use may be made of it. In rare cases it may abandon its share, or transfer its rights of ownership in it to an agnatically related household in return for some consideration. Formerly the only way a household could acquire a new or an additional house was by building it. But in 1957 one Umanagri household bought a house for 1,200 rupees from a former resident of the village who now lives in Srinagar. This was regarded by the villagers as a significant event, not only because the unprecedented sale of a whole homestead (consisting of a house and a granary) had taken place, but also because the owner had sold it to an unrelated person, and not to his agnates who lived close by.

Distinguishing Features of the Pandit House

Passing through a Kashmiri village, it is possible for a stranger to single out the Pandit houses by certain external signs and

[3] That new houses are not built oftener may also be an indicator of the fact that the rate of increase in population is not high among the Pandits.

marks. The three-storeyed house is no longer typical of the Pandits alone, as some Muslims also are prosperous enough to build it, but a two-storeyed one is certainly atypical of the former.

In all Pandit houses, the *wuz* and the steps leading to it are scrubbed every morning, except during periods of mourning, with brown earth and water. Therefore, a pot with brown earth and water in it is always to be found near the steps which lead into a Pandit house.

Red vermillion marks on the main door leading into a house are an indication of its Pandit residents. These marks, resembling the caste mark on a Brahman's forehead, are put on the door on various ritual occasions.

An examination of the door-frame may reveal in some crevice a few stalks of *darbha* (*Poa cynosuroides*), a jungle grass greatly prized by Brahmans all over India as a purifying agent and charm against evil spirits (see Dubois 1906, p. 150 *et passim*). Once a year, early in autumn, the family priest of every household brings fresh stalks of *darbha* to replace the previous year's charm.

The Pandits grow various types of flowers, particularly marigolds, in their kitchen gardens for use at daily worship and periodical rituals. Marigolds in the garden, or wreaths of marigolds hanging from pegs under the eaves, are yet another unmistakable sign of a Pandit house.

Lastly, if floral patterns and other symbols are found painted on the façade of a house, it undoubtedly belongs to a Pandit household. Such patterns are made by women whenever a ritual initiation or a marriage takes place.

'What is a House?'

A Pandit's attachment to his house is great. He is born and brought up in it; and here he gets shelter, food and emotional security. It is again here that he receives and entertains his kith and kin; performs various rituals and ceremonies; keeps his belongings; and when the end comes, it is here he wants to die. To a Pandit his *gara* is symbolic of the purpose of his existence and strivings. All the major events in his life and in the lives of his coresident relatives (births, marriages, partitions and

deaths) take place in his home. He devotes his life to making a contribution, in one capacity or another, to the upkeep of the *gara* (house and household) to which he belongs. The sentiments of love, sharing and solidarity that characterize interkin relations in a well-integrated household, are in the Pandits' estimation, the highest ideals of human conduct. A Pandit believes that he can find immortality through his sons, who will continue to live in his house after his death, just as his father lived there before him.

Since a Pandit woman resides after marriage in the home of her husband, her attachment to her natal *gara* is not as strong as that of a man to his ancestral home. Moreover, a woman has no jural rights of ownership or inheritance in her father's *chulah*. By contrast she develops a strong attachment to the home of her husband in which she spends the greater part of her life, becomes a mother, and thus finds the fulfilment of her life. She takes an interest in the well-being of her conjugal *gara* as it is the home of her sons.

The *gara* is loved and valued in consequence of the sentiments associated with it, and not merely because of its economic value. A Pandit's grief when he loses his house in a fire is great. Vasadev Pandit of Umanagri was on a visit to his wife's parents in another village when his house was gutted by fire in 1947. The day after the fire, while he was on the way to his village, a passerby told him that his house had been destroyed by fire. He fainted on hearing the news, and it was months before the effects of the shock wore off. But when several households own a house, and the relations between them are strained, it suffers greatly owing to the divided responsibility for its upkeep.

The Pandits do not regard regular house repairs essential, and unless a house is in a state of dilapidation, it is not repaired or renovated. The thatch on the roof is, however, replaced every few years. When a household can afford a new house, they leave their old home without any regrets. If a house is owned by a single household, they may pull it down by stages to make use of some of the old bricks and timber for their new house. There is nothing sacrosanct about an ancestral house once it has been vacated.

A visit to a Pandit house reveals much to an observant

person. The quantity and quality of the material possessions reveal the general economic standing of the household ; and the size and quality of the house itself indicate the economic condition of the household which built it. Thus, the two four-storeyed houses in Utrassu-Umanagri were built by prosperous households. Nowadays the material used in the house roof may indicate the prosperity or moderate means of the household. The rich use corrugated iron sheets or wooden shingles and the poorer households mud plaster or thatch. The presence of a cowshed and a granary are not a sure sign of prosperity, but their absence does indicate relative poverty. Order and cleanliness, or their absence, inside a house reveal the personal habits of the members of the household, particularly of the women whose duty it is to keep a house tidy and clean.

'What is a house?', an informant once asked me. Dissatisfied with my efforts, he finally gave the *right* answer himself: 'It is what makes a proud householder out of a mere man ; it is the universe made concrete. And a man gets the house he deserves: it is all preordained.'

II

The Household in Relation to the House

The 59 Pandit houses of Utrassu-Umanagri are inhabited by 87 households. Table II gives the range of households per house.

As the table shows, 36 of the houses contain only one *chulah* each. The number of households in a house varies over time. Comparative figures from other villages and verbal information about past times in Utrassu-Umanagri, however, indicate that at any time the majority of houses had only one *chulah*. In the recent past the maximum number of households simultaneously resident in a single house of the village has been four. In both the cases that were reported to me this number had later diminished to three ; in one case as a consequence of all the members of a sibling group marrying out, and in the other owing to one of the households moving into another

TABLE II

THE RANGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PER HOUSE

Number of Households in a House	1	2	3	*Totals*
Frequency	36	18	5	59 houses
TOTALS	36	36	15	87 households

house. As already stated, more than four households cannot be accommodated in the commonest type of Pandit house.

The rise or fall in the number of households per house is not directly related to a rise or fall in the Pandit population of a village. It rather reflects events in the developmental cycle of households. Fission within existing households leads to the formation of additional domestic groups. The shifting of a household, or the rare extinction of one (through marrying out, migration and/or death), are the social processes whereby a decline in the number of *chulahs* per house takes place. However, owing to the rarity of these processes, and a steady rise in Pandit population, increase in the number of households per house is the more usual phenomenon. The migration of households from one village to another is rare nowadays, but there has been one recent case of migration from Utrassu-Umanagri to the city of Srinagar. In the last 50 years only one household has immigrated from another village and taken up residence in Utrassu.[4]

Numerical Size and Genealogical Composition of the Household

The Pandit household is a small, patronymic kin-group of narrow range. The *chulah* name is usually shared by all the

[4] Lawrence found the Kashmiri peasant quick to migrate even at short notice: 'The great fact in the revenue history of a village was the flight of *assamis* [occupants of land]. If many *assamis* had fled since 1880, they had fled either because the revenue was heavy or *begar* [forced labour without wages] too severe' (1895, pp. 434f.). It is a great tribute to Lawrence's work as Settlement Commissioner that it brought about stability in rural Kashmir.

households constituting a family, and often even by all or most of the families belonging to a common patrilineage. Unrelated families and households also may have a common name. These family names are called *kram,* or *zat* (derived from Sanskrit *jati?*). The *kram* is generally a nick-name and refers to some outstanding or notorius deed, habit or peculiarity of an ancestor, remote or recent, or of the living *paterfamilias* of the household. As examples of *kram* the following may be cited: *kaula* (follower of Shaktism), *pandit* (learned man), *sadh* (ascetic), *jawansher* (youthful lion), *razdan* (confidant), *khar* (ass), *thanthur* (maker or seller of bronze and alloy vessels), *thalchoor* (plate thief), and *kotur* (pigeon). It is not, however, possible to translate and explain the origins of all *krams.* (For a comprehensive list see Koul 1924, pp. 86ff.)

The male members of the *chulah* are closely related agnatic kinsmen: grandfathers and grandsons, fathers and sons, uncles and nephews, siblings, and cousins. The female members, if married, are usually the spouses of the male members, and if unmarried, their agnates. The usual mode of post-marital residence is patrivirilocal. Only in exceptional circumstances is the core group of agnates less in number than the conjugal members of the household.

The range in the numerical size of the household for Utrassu-Umanagri is given in Table III.

TABLE III

SIZE OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Number of persons per household	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	18	*Totals*
Frequency	3	6	9	13	15	13	8	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	1	87 households
TOTALS	3	12	27	52	75	78	56	32	27	30	22	36	26	28	18	522 persons

It will be seen that, firstly, 362 persons, representing 69.3% of the Pandits of the village, live in households with one to nine

members, and the number of such households is 74, or over four-fifths of the total. Secondly, the mean average size is six and the mode five. And thirdly, there is only one household with as many as 18 members. This *chulah* is regarded by the villagers as an exceptional case in view of its durability.[5] One of the main characteristics of the Pandit household thus is its small size.

But, as the table shows, there is a considerable range in the numerical size of the *chulah*. Correlated with this range are variations in its genealogical composition. The simplest households, completely lacking in genealogical ramification, are, of course, the three one-member *chulahs*. The genealogically most complex households, 52 in number, consist of two to three generations and include first cousins. In between these two extremes may be placed six two-member households, and 26 others consisting of married couples and their unmarried children.

A Dynamic Approach to the Study of Households

It is our concern here to assess and explain the significance of (*i*) the range in the numerical size of the *chulah*, and (*ii*) the variation in its genealogical structure. Two approaches are possible. First, households with the same or similar genealogical composition may be regarded as constituting a 'type', and then a typology of households constructed. Such an analysis could lead to the postulation of the 'typical' household in terms of its generality (or higher incidence). The passage of time is of no significance in such an approach unless the investigator is interested in finding out if the typical household of today is different from that of, say, a generation ago. Even then the analysis will involve only a comparison of two sets of synchronic data ; the approach is static.

[5] This household was partitioned in 1958 when the younger brother of the head of the *chulah* decided to live separately with his wife and children in the new house, the construction of which had been completed earlier in the year, on the site of their old house, gutted in a fire in 1947. In the intervening years the household had lived as guests in a portion of the *mahant's* hospice, and this may well have been the reason why it survived so long. At the time of partition, the elder brother had two married sons and grandchildren, while the younger brother had only unmarried children.

A second dynamic approach, based on diachronic data, is more fruitful. A study covering even the brief time-span of a single generation (25 to 30 years) shows that the membership of a household is subject to recurrent processes of augmentation and depletion by natural events like birth and death, and social events like adoption, marriage and partition. As a result of such augmentation or depletion the numerical size and the genealogical composition of a household vary in different phases of its developmental cycle.

Thus, for a domestic group like the *chulah*, the passage of time is not irrelevant but implies regular development within a frame of continuity (see Fortes 1949a, pp. 54f.). In analytical terms the *chulah* is implicitly an 'event-structure' (see Nadel 1957, p. 128). Therefore, any study of it must bring out the consequences of events happening over time. In short, the factor of development must be duly recognized. Such an approach reveals the fallacy of postulating stable types, deriving a modal type, and treating other types as variants or socal aberrations. In Fortes's words, ' . . . these so-called types are in fact phases in the developmental cycle of a single general form for each society . . . . Residence patterns are the crystallization, at any given time, of the development process' (1958, p. 3).

As an illustration of the dynamic approach to the study of households, we will now briefly consider the developmental process in an Umanagri *chulah* between the years 1895 and 1957.

Keshavanand was the adopted son of Vasanand, the fourth *mahant*. His marriage, arranged by his father, took place in 1895. When the latter died in 1906, Keshavanand's succession to the *mahantship* was challenged by Shivanand, another claimant to the office, on the ground that a married householder could not become the *mahant*. The Government, on being appealed to by both the parties, decided against Keshavanand, and his rival became the new *mahant*.

Vasanand had owned two landed estates, one in his own name and the other on behalf of the goddess Uma. (Under Hindu law a divinity represented by an idol, shrine or temple can own property.) Keshavanand inherited part of the former estate, and built himself a new house (incidentally, the first four-storeyed

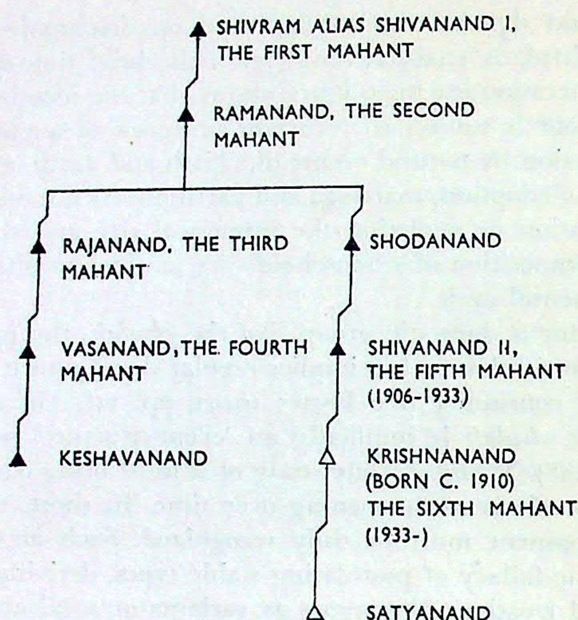


Fig. II

house in the village) in which he took up residence with his wife, two daughters and a son.

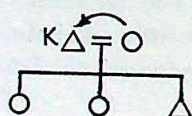


Fig. III (a)

By 1914 Keshavanand's wife had borne him two more daughters and two more sons. In that year the eldest daughter

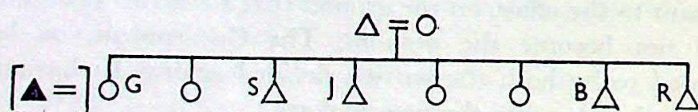


Fig. III (b)

was married. Four years later, a son, the last of Keshavanand's children, was born. Meanwhile, his eldest daughter had become a childless widow and had returned to live with her parents.

Keshavanand's second daughter's marriage took place in 1919; his first son's and third daughter's in 1923; and his second son's and fourth daughter's in 1928. In 1936, when Keshavanand died, his second son was already a father, so that the former's death reduced a paternal-fraternal extended family into a fraternal extended family.

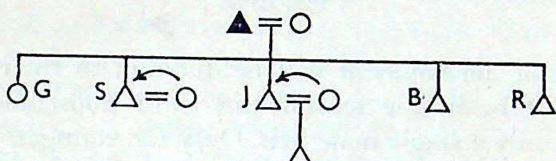


Fig. III (c)

Two years later the elder brother's wife died. In 1939 the third brother married, and a year later the eldest brother remarried. In 1942 their widowed mother died reducing the generation depth from three to two.

In 1946 the youngest brother's marriage took place. Later that year dissensions led to the partition of the *chulah*. The first and the third brothers, their wives and the former's children, and the widowed sister of the brothers, formed one partitive household, and the rest of the members of the unpartitioned *chulah* formed the second household. Both, however, continued to live in the same house.

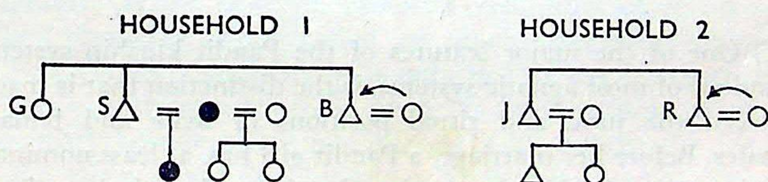


Fig. III (d)

In 1948 both these households broke up into four separate households; the widowed sister continued to live with the eldest brother. Five years later (in 1953) the youngest brother amalgamated his household with that of his eldest brother. No further developments have taken place since then.

It may be expected that a partition between the brothers will occur again in the first household. When it does occur, both the emergent *chulahs* will have two male heirs each, and, therefore,

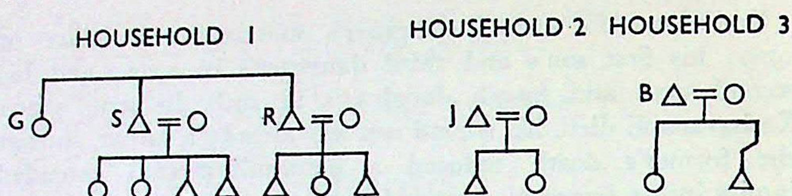


Fig. III (e)

the course of development will be different in their case from what it will be in the second and third households each of which has only a single male heir. Only the youngest of the four couples is young enough to expect more children. This brings us to the general form of the developmental cycle of the *chulah*.

General Form of the Developmental Cycle of the Household

Although birth, adoption, marriage, partition, and death are the major events in the developmental cycle of the *chulah,* yet not all cases of such events are structurally of the same significance. Thus, the birth of a second son does not have the same consequences as the birth of a first son, and both these events have quite a different ritual and jural significance from the birth of a daughter. We will now consider those characteristic features of Pandit kinship which account for the general form of the developmental cycle of the Pandit household.

(*i*) One of the major features of the Pandit kinship system, as indeed of most agnatic systems, is the distinction that is made between the jural and ritual positions of male and female agnates. Before her marriage, a Pandit girl has, at least nominally, the same jural rights as her brothers, though her ritual position is quite distinct. If she continues to live with her parents after her marriage, and her husband takes up residence with her, she is treated for the purpose of inheritance of property from her father *as if* she were a son. But for ritual purposes she becomes her husband's partner in his family. Also, her children do not acquire any direct jural or ritual rights and obligations, comparable to those of a son's children, *vis-à-vis* their mother's parents. Patriuxorilocal residence is, however, the exception, and not the rule, in Pandit society.

The usual practice is for a girl to leave her parental home on her marriage and take up residence in her husband's natal home. This is an event of great and crucial significance, not only in her emotional life, but also so far as her jural and ritual statuses are concerned. She is now two persons, as it were—a daughter as well as a wife. Moreover, marriage is her initiation into ritual adulthood. It also signifies a drastic change in her jural position as a daughter; she foregoes the right of inheritance, but retains certain residual and contingent rights in her natal home. Thus, she is entitled to receive prestations on various specified occasions from her parents and, after their death, from her brothers. In the event of widowhood she may return to live with her parents or brothers. In her conjugal household she acquires only the right of maintenance. In view of the foregoing facts, a daughter's birth and marriage have a significance different from a son's birth and marriage in the developmental cycle of the household (see below Chapter 6).

(*ii*) With regard to his ancestral property a man and his sons are coparceners, but so long as it is held jointly no individual shares are recognized in it. The jural equality between them thus remains suppressed, as it were, under the considerable authority which a Pandit father exercises over his sons. Besides being the 'manager' of the estate, the father enjoys considerable prestige as an older and more experienced man, and also moral authority as the begetter, protector and provider of his sons. Filial obedience and devotion are much extolled as virtues in Pandit society; therefore, it is only in rare circumstances that a son will demand his share from his father, whose consent is necessary because of his own interest in the estate.

But when a man dies, his widow's presence does not deter her sons from partitioning their father's ancestral and self-acquired estate among themselves. She has no jural right of inheritance in it and cannot, therefore, obstruct partition. Her relations with her sons are characterized more by mutual affection and deference than by superordination or subordination. To claim one's share from one's father is tantamount to revolting against him, but to claim it from one's brother does not affect the mother except in so far as she may choose to live as a member of a particular son's household. It is not, therefore, surprising that

partitions in the lifetime of a widowed mother are markedly more common than in the lifetime of a father. In other words, the structural significance of the father's death is considerably greater, in the developmental cycle of the *chulah,* than that of the mother's death (see below Chapters 7 and 8).

In the light of the above analysis, I will now describe the general possibilities of the developmental process within the household.

(*i*) If a man is survived by an only son, or one son and one or more daughters who have been (or will be) married virilocally, the subsequent structurally significant events in the developmental cycle of the household will be genetic development in the son's own family of procreation.[6]

(*ii*) If a man is survived by two or more sons quite a different course of development will follow. The eldest brother will become the head of the family, and consequently cease to be a peer of his brothers. Though the new *paterfamilias,* he does not enjoy the moral authority of a father over his brothers. The change in his status may not be welcome to his brothers, particularly to those among them who are close to him in age, and they may not give him unquestioning obedience. Usually other dissensions over the management of the estate and household affairs also arise, leading to fission in the household and partition of the estate. This may come to pass in the lifetime of their mother, but usually happens after her death.

After partition the developmental process continues in the emergent households, in the same broad manner as in the parental *chulah.* At the time of partition, the families of procreation of the various brothers may be in various phases of growth. If there is an unmarried man in the household, he continues to live with one of his married brothers.

(*iii*) So far we have considered the two main possibilities of a *chulah* with a sole, or with several male heirs. In case a couple have no sons at all, they may adopt one, and the course of development will be the same as in any other household with a natural sole male heir.

[6] The concepts of families of *orientation* and *procreation* have been taken from Warner 1937, p. 52n.

(iv) If a son is not adopted, two courses of development are possible.

(*a*) Either all the daughters will be married virilocally, and the household will become extinct when the sonless couple die. This will also happen if the couple do not have any children at all.

(*b*) Or, alternatively, one of the daughters, or the daughter (if there is only one), will not leave her parental home on her marriage, and her husband will take up residence with his wife and parents-in-law. She will inherit the estate, after her father's death, being the sole heir. Although such an arrangement may prevent the extinction of her natal *chulah* as a residential unit, her father's 'line of descent' will nonetheless cease to grow as her sons will belong to their father's patrilineage. If, after her parents' death, the daughter goes away with her husband and children to live in his natal home, then her father's household will become completely extinct.

In the foregoing discussion of the general form of the developmental cycle of the *chulah* only the main possibilities have been considered. Several other interesting but unusual courses of development also are possible. To take but one example, an elderly couple may marry a daughter patriuxorilocally even when they have a son, but who is too young to look after them and the estate. Later, after the father's death, partition is very likely to occur between sister and brother, just as it would occur between two brothers. In the special circumstances in which daughters are made to substitute for sons in Pandit society, a secondary and contingent set of rules of inheritance operate.

The main courses of development possible in the Pandit household are shown diagrammatically in Figure IV.

Phases of Development in the Households of Utrassu-Umanagri

I now return to a detailed examination of the genealogical composition of the Pandit households of Utrassu-Umanagri, and will describe the phase of development each household happened to be in when my sociological census was taken in March 1957.

(*i*) Of the 87 households of the village, three have only one member each, consisting of a bachelor in one case, a widow without any surviving children in another, and a widow whose only son has married uxorilocally in the third. The bachelor plans to marry and raise a family, and the second widow hopes her son will eventually return to his natal home, with his wife and children, on the death of his widowed mother-in-law. But the only development expected in the childless widow's *chulah* is its extinction upon her death.

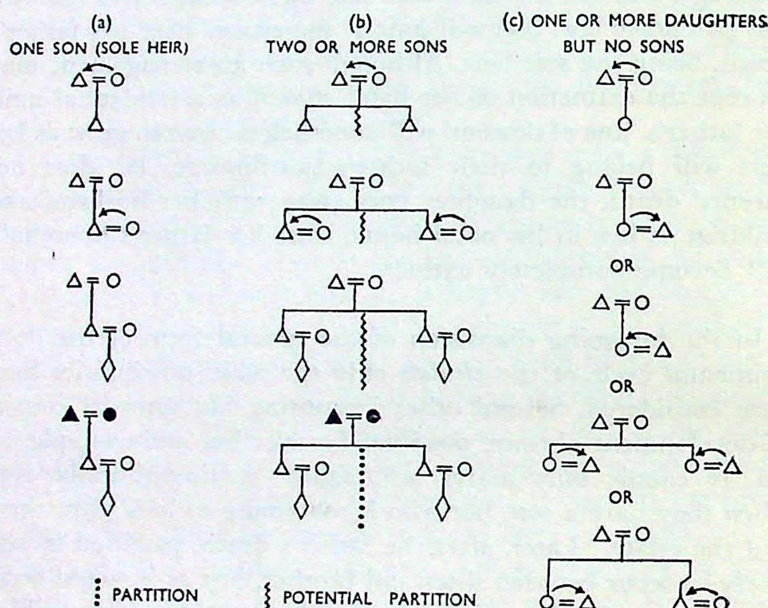


Fig. IV

(*ii*) There are six two-member households. The *mahant* is required by the conditions of his office to remain celibate. Therefore, like all his predecessors, he has adopted a son. Another household consists of a widower and his unmarried daughter, and in each of the two others there are a widow and her son. The remaining two households are of childless married couples. The couple are young in one case and have been married less than a year ; they will probably raise a family. But in the other case, the wife is a 46-year old former widow who

has passed the child-bearing age and no children are likely to be added to this household unless by adoption.

(*iii*) Twenty-six *chulahs* are nuclear families.[7] In one of these cases the household consists of a man, his wife and his children including some by a former wife, now dead. Sixteen households include, among other children, two or more sons, and nine only one son each. The only child in the remaining household is a daughter. At least some of the latter 10 households, each with a sole heir at present, will probably have no more children added to them by the time the mother reaches her menopause.

There are also three cases of incorporation: in two households the wife's child (son in one case and daughter in the other) by her former husband, now dead, and in one household the husband's father's sister's son's son, who is an orphan.

(*iv*) There are nine two-generation households in a transitional phase between nuclear and paternal-extended or fraternal-extended families.[8] They are composed of :

(*a*) a couple, their unmarried daughter, an only son and his wife *in one case ;*

(*b*) a couple, their children including two or more sons, at least one of whom is married, and the son's (sons') wife (wives) *in three cases ;*

(*c*) a widow, her only son and his wife *in one case ;*

(*d*) a widow, her children including sons, one of whom is married, and his wife *in one case ;*

(*e*) a widower, his children including sons, at least one of whom is married, and the son's (sons') wife (wives) *in two cases ;*

[7] 'The association of a married couple with their young children is called a nuclear, or parental, family and it is frequently a discrete residential and economic unit, with its own dwelling and its own property' (Barnes, 1955, 13, p. 404).

[8] The term 'extended family' is being used here to designate a group consisting of two or more families of procreation united lineally by the father-son bond, or collaterally by the sibling bond. In the absence of better terms, it is proposed to call the former the *paternal-extended* family and the latter the *fraternal-extended* family. A combined *paternal-fraternal-extended* family would be based upon both the types of extension. It may be added here that the criteria of these definitions are structural ; functional factors like co-residence or joint property rights are not involved (see Madan 1962b and 1962c).

(*f*) a widower, his two daughters, one of whom is married, and her husband *in one case.*

Living with the first of these households is the *chulah* head's widowed childless sister, who returned to her natal home when her husband died.

(*v*) Another 14 households contain three generations each. Seven of these are complete paternal-extended families. One of them also includes two incorporated members related to the head of the *chulah* as his wife's deceased sister's son and daughter. The grandmother is dead in four households; and the remaining three consist of the surviving kin of formerly paternal-extended families—a widow, her only son, his wife and children.

(*vi*) There are 13 more households in a transitional phase and likely to grow into fraternal-extended families. Eight of these are two-generation and five three-generation *chulahs.* The former eight consist of a man and his

(*a*) unmarried younger brother or brothers, wife, and children *in five cases;*

(*b*) unmarried younger brother, wife, son, and son's wife *in one case;*

(*c*) unmarried younger brother, son, and son's wife *in one case;* and

(*d*) widowed mother, unmarried younger brother, and wife *in one case.*

The five three-generation households consist of a man, his wife, young child or children, and

(*a*) widowed mother and unmarried elder brother *in one case;*

(*b*) widowed mother and unmarried younger brother *in three cases;* and

(*c*) unmarried younger brother, married adult son, son's wife and daughter *in one case.*

The first of these five households will not grow into a fraternal-extended family as it is the elder brother, already over fifty years old, who is unmarried.

(vii) There are ten households in the village which are fraternal-extended families. Seven of these are two-generation families consisting of two or more brothers, at least two of whom are married, their wives and children. Living in one of these households is a widowed childless sister who returned to her natal home on becoming a widow.

Three are three-generation families. Two of these consist of two brothers, their wives and children, and the grandchildren (through a son or sons) of the elder brother. The third consists of three brothers, their widowed mother, and the wives and children of two of them.

(viii) There are six more households which are differently constituted owing to the occurrence of certain events, like the unusually early death of an adult member, or the unusual non-occurrence of certain events, like marriage or partition. These households are composed as follows :

(a) a man, his wife and young children, and his father's old unmarried brother ;

(b) a man, his wife and children, the wife of one of his sons and his father's old unmarried brother ;

(c) two brothers, their wives and children, and their father's brother's childless widow ;

(d) a widow, her young son, and her deceased husband's brother's widow ;

(e) a widow, her children including a married son, his wife and children, and her deceased husband's brother's widow : and

(f) a man, Nandalal, his unmarried elder brother, his father's unmarried brother (an old cripple), his father's father's brother's old widow Mother, and his wife and her daughter (by a former deceased husband). Nandalal's step-daughter is Mather's deceased son's child and, therefore, her step-father's second cousin. The presence of second cousins in a household is exceptional. The genealogical relations of the members of this *chulah* are shown below (see Fig. V).

But for the unmarried uncle the first household would have been a nuclear family, and the second household is in a

transitional phase between a nuclear and an extended family. Similarly, without the widowed aunt the third household would have been a fraternal-extended family. These uncles and aunts are members of their respective households not by sufferance but by jural right. Nevertheless, it is likely that they, particularly

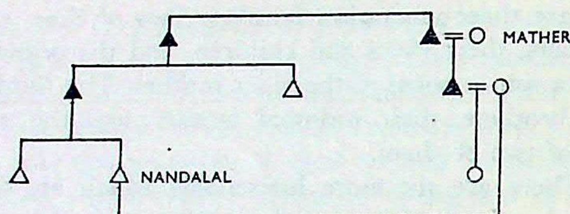


Fig. V

the widows, may be regarded as a burden by those who, in fact, support them. The uncles have their share in the ancestral house to bequeath to their nephews, and, therefore, their position is somewhat better than that of the widowed aunts.

The foregoing details about household composition in Utrassu-Umanagri are presented in summary form in Table IV.

That the differences in genealogical composition of the households reflect various phases of development is further borne out by examination of the intervening processes of augmentation and depletion between two phases. To take only the example of the 26 nuclear families of the village, 18 of these resulted from the partition of fraternal-extended families, and the remaining eight from paternal-extended families, after the death of both the parents in the senior generation.

The Ideal Household

In the foregoing discussion we have emphasized that the search for a standard type of household, in terms of composition, is misleading and conceals the true relationship between *chulahs* which are differently constituted. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the Pandits themselves generally regard the extended family as the ideal and the characteristic form of the household. Family histories and sociological censuses from six villages, including Utrassu-Umanagri, show that the number of house-

holds which are nuclear families never exceeds the number of households which are extended families in various phases of growth (see Table V).

TABLE IV

PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT IN HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Main types of household composition	*Number of generations in a household*	*Range of collateral agnatic kinship*	*Frequency*
Single member households: bachelor, widow	1	—	3
Two-member households: married couple, parent and child	2	—	4
A parent (spouse dead) and his or her children	2	siblings	2
Nuclear families	2	siblings	26
Household in a transitional phase between nuclear and extended families	2	siblings	9
Paternal-extended families	3	siblings	11
Surviving kin from paternal-extended families after the grandfather's death	3	siblings	3
Families in a transitional phase likely to grow into fraternal-extended families	2-3	siblings	13
Fraternal-extended families	2-3	siblings and first cousins	10
Special cases	2-3	siblings and second cousins	6

Every Pandit desires to have many sons and grandchildren living under his tutelage. Brothers lay emphasis upon the bonds of fraternal solidarity and the advantages of joint living. But sooner or later strains develop in fraternal-extended families which are also joint households. When this happens, each

brother and his wife extoll the virtues of households consisting of nuclear families. Love and sharing in the nuclear family, and obedience and fair play in the paternal-extended family, are sharply contrasted with the bickerings, jealousy, and meanness which are then held to be characteristic of the fraternal-extended and joint households. Thus, what may be regarded by a Pandit as the ideal household composition varies, to a considerable extent, according to the structural situation in which he finds himself.

TABLE V

NUCLEAR AND EXTENDED FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS: COMPARISON OF INCIDENCE

Composition of the household	*Village Hokur*	*Village Khonmuh*	*Village Koyil*	*Village Kreri*	*Village Vernag*	*Village Utrassu-Umanagri*
Nuclear families	12	8	11	6	6	26
Extended families in various phases of growth	18	9	15	8	16	52
Totals	30	17	26	14	22	78

5

Recruitment to the Household: (1) Birth and Adoption[1]

'ALL FORMS of groups are based upon some principle of recruitment whereby individuals are made members, that is, are made to assume the implicit rights and obligations. . . . It is by this principle that groups maintain and renew themselves, and by this principle too, that individuals change into persons or add new 'roles' to those they already hold' (Nadel 1951, p. 151). Among the Pandits the customary and usual modes of recruitment to the household are being born, adopted, or married into it. The natal members of a *chulah,* however, generally outnumber the conjugal members. Table VI shows the basis of *chulah* membership for the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri.

I

BIRTH

IN THE year 1957 fourteen children were born in the village, out of whom two were still-born. The number of deaths was six.

[1] The writing of this and the following chapters has posed two problems. Firstly, the aim of presenting a general picture of role variation in the course of a person's lifetime made it imperative that I combine several types of evidence, for my own observations alone did not yield sufficient material which could be pieced together into an intelligible whole. Therefore, I had to heavily draw upon the statements of informants regarding (*i*) the jural rules which mould behaviour, and (*ii*) role variations as they reportedly occurred in particular cases.

Secondly, limitations of space necessitated that references to the illustrative material be reduced to the barest minimum. This, of course, does not matter so far as the jural rules are concerned, but I would have certainly liked to mention more particular instances, and in greater detail, than I have. A similar difficulty was faced in the writing of portions of Chapter 9.

TABLE VI

INCIDENCE OF VARIOUS MODES OF RECRUITMENT TO THE HOUSEHOLD

Mode of Recruitment	*Frequency*	*Approximate percentage of the total Pandit population*
Birth	372	71.0
Adoption	13	2.5
Marriage	133	25.5
Incorporation	4	1.0
TOTALS	522 persons	100.0

Calculating for the population of 522 persons (as it was in March 1957), the vital index was 200.

Physical, Supernatural and Cultural Factors in Childbirth

The Pandits are well aware that sexual intercourse between a physiologically normal couple is the material cause of conception, but supernatural and mystical forces are judged to be decisive in determining conception and safe delivery. They recognize a fertile period among women between menarche and menopause, and among men from 'the rise of the juice in the testicles' till senile old age. Sexual interest in the opposite sex is said to become pronounced during adolescence following the onset of the first menstruation among girls and the first *emissio seminis* among boys. But the correct physiology of menstruation and procreation is not known. Conception is generally believed to take place when a male and a female reach orgasm together and 'vital' fluids are discharged simultaneously into the womb.

Apart from organic defects, supernatural forces are believed to prevent conception or safe delivery. The good or bad *karma* of a couple, the benign or unfavourable conjunction of planets in their horoscopes, the favour or wrath of gods, and the blessings of saints or the malevolence of evil spirits are believed to be

the ultimate determinants of whether a couple will have many or no children, or only daughters. Wish-making in a temple or a shrine by a person whose heart is 'pure and broken' is believed to lead to desired childbirth. Masterjee says that he made such a wish at the holy springs of Umanagri and only then did his wife, who had already borne him three daughters, give birth to a son.

Supernatural interference may also follow the breaking of certain taboos. Thus a pregnant woman should not see an eclipse nor do any work during its duration, or else her child may be born malformed. Raja (village Vangam) is said to be hare-lipped because his mother carelessly sliced potatoes during an eclipse.[2] A pregnant woman is expected to avoid places such as old trees, creeks, graveyards and cremation grounds, which are likely or known to be the haunts or dwelling-places of evil spirits. If she visits any such place, and particularly if she defecates or urinates there, she may be seized by an evil spirit and have a miscarriage, or give birth to a still-born child. There were several such 'seizures' in the village in the course of my fieldwork, and when Premnath's wife gave birth to a still-born daughter, her husband's paternal cousin told me that she had been frightened by an evil spirit when she had gone out into the kitchen garden after nightfall, presumably to urinate. Evil magic also may cause miscarriages and still-births as also barrenness.

The Pandits regard miscarriages and still-births as unfortunate and ominous. Their incidence is difficult to determine. Miscarriages among multiparae are often due to physical debility and overwork, although the Pandits usually attribute them to supernatural interference. When a woman conceives for the first time she is youthful and usually healthy ; besides, she is not allowed to do any heavy work or exert herself too much or too long during the later months of pregnancy. Charms made by priests, magicians and saintly persons are worn by pregnant

[2] There are only two physically malformed Pandits, born as such, in Utrassu-Umanagri ; one, a man aged 63, is a cripple, and another, a boy aged seven, is blind. Such persons are pitied, and the only limitations on their participation in social life are such as are imposed by their disability. I was unable to make detailed enquiries about these two cases for fear of hurting the feelings of the families concerned. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether they are connected with the breach of any taboos.

women as a protection against evil spirits, the evil eye of other people, and evil magic that may be contrived by their foes.

Deliberate abortions are probable rare, and it is almost impossible to obtain any definite information about them. The only motive for abortion would be to save a widow or unmarried girl from absolute shame and social damnation. There are no unmarried mothers in the village to-day nor have there been any in the recent past. Occasionally a lapse may occur and my informants asserted that if such a woman failed to commit suicide, her parents or parents-in-law would sooner poison or strangle her than let it be known that she had become pregnant. If any other Pandits came to know of what had been done, they would whole-heartedly approve. Apart from the compulsiveness of cultural norms and the fear of consequences, it should be emphasized that the opportunities for fornication are extremely limited. Widows and nubile girls are closely watched and are not permitted to mix freely with men who are not their close kin. In fact, what strikes the observer is the extreme restraint which characterizes relations between adult men and women in Pandit society. Moreover, girls are usually married within a couple of years or so of menarche. If a married woman is guilty of sexual misdemeanour, her conduct has serious moral implications, but hardly any social consequences as no children are socially recognized as illegitimate ; therefore, there is no discrimination of any sort against them. But this should not be taken to mean that adultery is rampant ; much to the contrary. In view of the restrictions on social intercourse between the sexes, already referred to, the incidence of illegitimate childbirth probably is not high.

The Pandit women have a well-developed lore connected with childbirth. Thus they say that it is possible to forecast the sex of an unborn child by observing the expectant woman's unconscious actions, her appearance, and the likes and dislikes she develops during pregnancy. Underlying various portents is a traditional identification of the two sexes with two opposite sets of values. The male sex is forecast by the portents which the Pandits regard as good ; for example, the expectant woman's preference for sweet (as contrasted with hot or sour) dishes, her greater use of the limbs of the right, mystically superior, side of

the body, general cheerfulness and good health foretell a male child. In these beliefs may be seen a cultural expression of the preference for sons among the Pandits. Such an attitude may only be expected in a society which puts the major emphasis upon agnation. Pandit women also believe that it is possible to influence the looks, character and sex of the developing child if the pregnant woman thinks of a beautiful and virtuous man or woman when she feels the first movements of the foetus inside her body.

Attitude toward Sons and Daughters

The Pandits say that children are the joy of life, the fruit of good *karma* and the blessing of gods. Sons are particularly auspicious and, therefore, greatly desired ; they are called 'this as well as the other world' (*yahi-lok ta para-lok*) of their parents. Under the rules of patrivirilocal residence and patrilineal inheritance it is the exclusive duty of sons to look after their parents in their old age. Further it is the sons alone who can offer food and drink to their manes and 'immortalize' them by continuing the 'line' of descent. The greater the number of sons a couple have, the happier they are, though they may be afraid of the envy of others.

Although the giving of a daughter in marriage is regarded as a highly meritorious act, yet the absence of daughters is not generally bewailed if a couple have sons. 'Daughters are guests', say the Pandits ; 'they are ornaments held in custody to be surrendered at the rightful owner's demand' ; 'they are the wealth of others and not of those who give them birth'. Unlike sons, who are the support of their parents' old age, daughters are regarded as a heavy responsibility. On their conduct in their conjugal *chulah* depends the 'good name' of their parents ; moreover, any sexual lapse by a nubile daughter would bring lasting shame to her natal family. If a couple have more than three or four daughters, they are regarded as a burden because a large amount of money is needed to marry daughters into good families. Vasadev's wife had already given birth to a son and four daughters, of whom only two daughters were alive, when another daughter was born to her. Greatly disappointed, he said to me: 'What else is there in store for a luckless man

except daughters?' When Shanta (village Koyil) gave birth to her fourth daughter, her mother-in-law exclaimed '*chakh* (four)!' and burst into tears. Similarly when Natha's wife (village Hokur) was delivered of her first child, a daughter, his mother bewailed: 'Natha, my first-born, did not deserve a daughter. My daughter-in-law is unlucky and has brought bad luck into the family.' There is an oft-quoted Kashmiri saying to the effect that a daughter's birth makes even a philosophic man (who has renounced the world) gloomy, whereas a son's birth is like sunrise in the abode of gods.

Twin births are rare and, according to the genealogies I collected, up to nine generations in depth, nobody seems to have had triplets. There is at present only one set of male twins in Utrassu-Umanagri. Having twin sons is regarded as auspicious and lucky, and having twin daughters as a misfortune. There is also a slight sense of shame associated with a twin birth because it is probably thought to indicate hypersexuality of the parents.

Young boys are better treated by their elders than young girls. This is particularly true of a first son. Whether it is in the distribution of food and clothes or in the verbal expression of love, sons generally receive greater attention than daughters. The Pandits affirm that daughters should be disciplined early, and not spoilt, as they have to be married into other households. One of my informants complained about the lack of forethought on the part of his elder brother's wife in these words: 'She is a fool and overfeeds her daughter [aged eleven]. The girl is a glutton already, will grow ungainly in body, and bring shame to us all.' There are no such reservations about the overfeeding of sons who should grow big, healthy and strong. Similarly, many informants suggested that, since nubile girls did not move about much or freely in the village, it was not as necessary for them to have many changes of clothes as it was for their brothers who attended school and occasionally went to the town. In brief, the Pandits admit of discrimination against girls, and always try to justify it, but do not agree that they love their daughters less than their sons.

On their part, girls generally behave as if they are hardly aware of discrimination against themselves; training from early

childhood teaches them not only to accept it as normal and proper, but also to be solicitous of the welfare of their brothers. If a girl does make a protest, the only response, if any, it evokes from her parents is a reprimand. However, after marriage daughters come emotionally closer to their parents and sons drift away from them.

Rituals and Ceremonies connected with Childbirth

The Sanskritic tradition stipulates the performance of a ritual before the marriage of a woman, to ensure that she becomes fertile.[3] This is performed a day or two before her marriage. There is also a non-Sanskritic ceremony[4] in the seventh month of the first pregnancy called 'the giving of milk'. The ceremony becomes a pretext for the pregnant woman to go to her natal home and spend a few restful weeks there before she returns laden with gifts of ornaments and new clothes for herself, and also gifts in cash and kind for her relatives-in-law, which are given to her mother-in-law for distribution. The most important of these gifts is yoghourt, which is preferred to milk because it is regarded as more auspicious. The yoghourt is distributed among the close relatives of the pregnant woman's husband and the neighbours of her conjugal *chulah*. The purpose of the ceremony seems to be threefold: (*i*) As already stated, it enables the young pregnant woman to spend some time with her natal family. She gets not only physical rest, but also feels less tense and nervous than she would among her relatives-in-law whom she may not have known for more than a year. It is significant that this ceremony is usually held before the delivery of the first child only, and never after the birth of the second child.

[3] The Pandits perform these Sanskritic religious rites in the form ordained by the ancient law-giver Laugaksha, and laid down in Sanskrit texts preserved by priests in hand-written scrolls. Nowadays printed copies also are available.

[4] Non-Sanskritic ceremonies are distinguished from Sanskritic rituals by the fact that priests and *mantra* have no place in the former, and there is no supernatural sanction behind them. Also women play a predominant part in these ceremonies. Cf. Srinivas: 'The Brahman rites (in Mysore) are a mixture of both indigenous and Sanskritic rites—the latter more than the former. The indigenous rites form the woman's portion of the rites at which no *mantrams* are recited and in which men have very little to do' (1942, pp. 66f.).

(*ii*) 'The giving of milk' ceremony is the public announcement and celebration of a woman's first conception which is in a sense the biggest event in her life. The Pandits regard children as one of the main purposes of marriage, and when a daughter-in-law is delivered of her first child they say of her that she has 'proved her worth and found her real self (*athi ayi*)'. (*iii*) It is also intended to ensure the safe birth and survival of the child. The Pandits believe that the distribution of yoghourt ensures the flow of mother's milk on which the life of the child depends.

Childbirth may take place in the pregnant woman's natal or conjugal home, but it is regarded desirable to send a woman to her conjugal home for her confinement. In view of the emphasis upon agnation, the event is obviously of far greater interest to her conjugal *chulah* than to her natal household. Professional midwives, who are Muslims, and experienced older women of the family and the neighbourhood assist at the delivery. In recent years five women of Utrassu-Umanagri have had their confinement in the hospital at Anantnag.

Childbirth causes ritual pollution[5] as everything that comes out of the human body (spittle, perspiration, faeces, urine, menses and offspring) is polluting, though some of these things are less polluting than others. Childbirth causes pollution to the

[5] Ritual pollution is a ritually initiated person's fall from a state of ritual purity, which prevents him from making ritual offerings to gods and manes. Ritual pollution caused by various happenings is of three types: (*i*) If any part of the human body comes into contact with a defiling object, like leather or human faeces, or a defiling person, like a Muslim, that part of the body is rendered impure, and must be washed with earth and water. There are various degrees of pollution resulting from various types of contact, but even the worst pollution of this kind is removed by a bath accompanied by the recitation of *mantra*. (*ii*) Births and deaths cause the second type of pollution. Direct physical defilement is not involved in the case of all the patrilineal kinsmen and their wives who are affected by it. Such pollution lasts a fixed number of days ranging from three to ten days, the time being longer in the case of those persons who are closer in genealogical relationship to the person who has died, or whose wife has borne a child. (*iii*) The eating of beef and food cooked by a Muslim, or sexual intercourse with a Muslim results in permanent pollution and the guilty person ceases to be a Brahman. If a Pandit eats impure food accidentally, a Sanskritic purificatory ceremony will restore him to his normal status. The Pandits admit that a person may secretly cohabit with a Muslim and continue to live as a Brahman. They regard pollution by eating impure food far more seriously.

woman who gives birth to a child and some of her husband's kin. It is not only direct physical defilement which is involved but also its mystical extension to the child's ritually initiated male agnates and their wives.

Thus, even when a woman is delivered of a child in her natal home, the members of that *chulah* do not suffer lasting pollution. Only those women who help at the confinement are affected. They take a bath afterwards and are restored to their normal state of purity. But all of the newly born child's agnates suffer longer pollution. The period of pollution is 10 days for all ritually initiated male agnates, and their wives, who are related to the child through his father's father's father. Remoter agnates and their wives observe pollution for periods ranging from six to three days. The miscarriage of a foetus does not cause pollution, but the birth of a still-born child does. Strictly, ritual pollution should begin at the moment a child is born, but since patrilineal kinsmen are not invariably a local grouping, it is not always possible to observe this rule of immediate pollution. In such cases the Pandits say that, 'just as an eclipse begins when you see it, similarly pollution begins when you hear of it.' The days of pollution to be observed are, however, always counted from the day of birth or death.

Non-Sanskritic ceremonies follow on the third, fifth and sixth days after childbirth. The ceremony on the sixth day, *shrandar,* is the occasion on which the baby receives its first bath and is given a name. Pandit names are in most cases the names of Hindu gods and goddesses, or the words for such qualities as chastity, intelligence, cheerfulness and grace which are prized in human beings. If the mother is well, she also is bathed. After the bathing is over, the baby's father's eldest married sister lights a fire of birch bark. Taking a piece of burning bark in her right hand, she waves it round the head of the mother, who has the baby in her lap, and says several times '*shokh ta punahsun,* congratulations and may you have more (children)'. The apparent purpose of this ceremony is to ensure the child's safety and the mother's future fertility. It is of interest to note that the major role in this ceremony is played by the new-born child's father's sister. Her ties with and residual interest in her natal family are thus stressed.

On the eleventh or the twelfth day after childbirth ritual bathing and more non-Sanskritic ceremonies take place. The first Sanskritic rite, called the *kahanethar,* and mainly purificatory in character, is also performed on this day or soon after.

II

Adoption

Adoption as a mode of recruitment to the household is resorted to only in unusual circumstances; there are only 13 adopted persons living in the village as against 372 who are the natural children of their parents. Adoptions result in a re-arrangement of *chulah* membership in the village, but in rare cases (three in Utrassu-Umanagri), when the adopted child has his natal home outside the village, an addition to the village population takes place.

A couple usually adopt a son when they are convinced that they are not going to have one of their own. The Pandits do not approve of the Sanskritic injunction that a man may marry a second wife, in the lifetime of his first wife, if the latter fails to bear him a son. There are only two childless women in the village, although several are without sons.

A bachelor without any prospect of getting married may adopt a son, but this is very rare. In Utrassu-Umanagri the only case of this kind is that of the *mahant;* it has been necessitated by his obligatory bachelorhood. Sarwanand, a bachelor of 50, when asked by me as to why he had not adopted a son, replied, 'What use will a son be to me in the life hereafter when I have not had the happiness of this world?'

Although a man may support his adoptive parents in their old age, offer them oblations after they are dead, and continue his adoptive father's line of descent, he is a poor substitute for a natural son. Therefore, childless widowers usually endeavour to remarry and do not generally adopt sons. There is only one instance of a widower of the village adopting a son, and this too occurred about 35 years ago. But it is a common practice for childless widows to adopt sons: three of the thirteen adoptive

sons of Utrassu-Umanagri were adopted by widows. A widow whose parents-in-law, or deceased husband's brothers, are alive is not expected to take the initiative in adopting a son. In any case, she adopts in the name of her dead husband, and her adoptive son inherits the latter's property, and also assumes his family name.

When a well-to-do couple have several sons but no daughters, they may adopt a girl ; but such cases must be very rare as I was not able to record any instance of the same in the six villages in which enquiries were made by me. More often a daughter may be adopted for a period of a few months or weeks to be married in exchange for a daughter-in-law. Sangded, a widow of Utrassu-Umanagri, adopted her sister's daughter from another village in 1957, and later in the same year gave her in marriage to a young man of the village in exchange for his father's brother's daughter as the wife for Sangded's son. In some cases a non-agnatic kinsman, usually the mother's father or her brother, nominally adopts a girl at the time of her marriage to enable her being given in marriage to a man of the same *gotra* name as her father. This may become necessary because a Pandit cannot give his daughter in marriage to a man who has the same *gotra* name as himself (see Chapter 6). Both these are cases of *ad hoc* adoption, specifically for a purpose and of short duration. The general attitude of the Pandits towards the adoption of daughters is summed up in the following saying: 'Adopting a daughter is like rearing a pariah dog in the hope of obtaining wool.'

Rules of Adoption

According to Pandit usage, the most eligible person to be adopted as a son is an agnate of the adoptive father ; in practice non-agnatic kin also are chosen. Adoption of a cognatic kinsman of his wife by the adoptive father is said to be a consequence of either need or spite. In other words, if no child among a man's kin is available for adoption, or if he wants particularly to displease his own patrilineal kin, then he may choose a kinsman of his wife as his son.

Out of the 13 cases of adoption in Utrassu-Umanagri, the genealogical relation of the adopted son to his adoptive father

is that of an agnate in eight cases (brother's son in five cases and a relatively distant kinsman in three cases); of other cognates in three cases (daughter's son in two cases and sister's son in one case); and of an affine (wife's brother) in two cases. In both the cases of the adoption of a daughter's son the choice was made by a widow in the name of her deceased husband. A man's preference for choosing an agnate is thus clearly indicated.

The adopted child is generally under five years of age and ritually uninitiated, but well past the weaning stage. If he is older and has been initiated then the *yagnopavit* is taken off, and a new ritual initiation performed. This is, however, unnecessary if the boy is a closely related agnate of his adoptive father. Ritual initiation at the hands of the adoptive father puts the seal, as it were, on the act of adoption. Till then a natural parent can demand the boy back; and adoptive parents can return their son to his natural parents.

The ceremony of adoption is not accompanied by any rituals. After the two households concerned have agreed upon the adoption, the adoptive father, accompanied by a few of his closest relatives and friends, goes to the natal home of the child on an auspicious day. There they are entertained and then the child's natural father places the boy in his adoptive father's lap, who takes him away to his new home. A feast is generally given to mark the occasion. If the child's natural and adoptive parents belong to the same *chulah,* any ceremony is unlikely to take place.

Formerly the presence of relatives and friends was regarded as sufficient proof of the act of adoption which was made known to the public at the feast given on the occasion. There is, however, one recent case of an adoption having been registered in a court of law, ostensibly to safeguard the rights of the adopted child. Although it is likely that registrations will become the usual practice in future, in this particular case it was considered essential because of the unusual circumstances under which the adoption took place. The main purpose of this adoption was to retain possession of an estate. Ram and Lakshman are married brothers with children and live as coparceners in one house. They have built the house on a plot of land which belonged to

Amar, their father's brother's son. In 1955 Amar had been dead for several years and his childless widow, who was living with Ram and Lakshman, was persuaded by Ram, an elderly and respected man, to adopt Lakshman's 12-year-old son Bala so that she and her husband might receive proper ritual offerings of food. The adoption was registered in a Magistrate's Court at Anantnag. Amar's widow, old and unwell, died a few months later, and her husband's estate was inherited by the boy Bala. It had remained in her possession mainly because it was not of considerable value and partly because nobody wanted to hurt her feelings. Bala continues to live with his own parents although legally he is, as a consequence of the adoption, his natural father's cousin once removed. If Bala had not inherited Amar's estate, then, according to the Pandit custom, Amar's other cousins and nephews could have claimed shares in it. The adoption prevented this from happening and preserved the *status quo*.

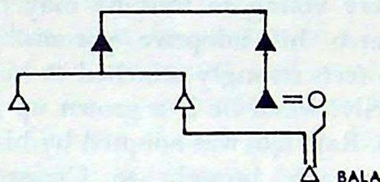


Fig. VI

A child's natural parents are not expected to receive any reward or compensation for giving him away in adoption, or else it will amount to sale. What induces parents to give a son in adoption is their close kinship ties, implying love and obligation, with the person seeking a son, or their poverty and the consequent inability to bring up several children. In cases of adoption like that of Bala, the motive of the natural parents is, at least partly, material gain. Such cases are rare, and do not deprive the natural parents of their child; therefore, they feel no reluctance in giving him away in adoption.

Consequences of Adoption

Ideally and jurally adoption means the severence of all ritual and economic ties which customarily exist between a person and his natural parents. He owes no ritual or economic obligations

towards them, nor do they retain any such obligations towards him. He does not inherit from them nor does he make ritual offerings of food to them. These rights and obligations are transferred from the natural to the adoptive parents. The boy assumes the family name and also, at the time of his initiation, the *gotra* name of his adoptive father. But a man who has been given in adoption does not marry any woman whom he could not have married had he not been given in adoption. The immutability of blood ties is thus emphasized. Further, he does not lose any estate that may have been already vested in him individually at the time of his adoption.

To facilitate the building up of sentiments of affection of a child towards his adoptive parents, the natural parents are expected not to display any special interest in him, particularly if they belong to the same household as the adoptive parents. But it is doubtful if complete emotional assimilation does take place in all cases. The Pandits emphasize that a child should be adopted when very young so that he may develop emotional attachment towards his adoptive parents. Nevertheless, an adopted son who feels strongly attached to his adoptive parents does not necessarily, when he is a grown up man, feel likewise towards their kin. Raja (46) was adopted by his mother's brother about forty years ago, brought to Utrassu-Umanagri from another village, and reared with love and care. On his adoptive father's death, Raja obtained his share of the estate through partition from his adoptive father's brother and built himself a new house. He displays a strong indifference towards his adoptive father's patrilineal kinsmen who are also his neighbours. He visits them rarely and took surprisingly little interest in a dispute which arose among them in 1957 regarding the division of an estate in which he also had acquired rights of inheritance by the fact of his adoption.

III

The Parent-Child Relationship

In a society in which kinship provides the principal framework for social action, the parent-child relationship is bound to be

complex and socially of great significance. An analysis of parent-child relations among the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri reveals that the relationship has several prominent aspects—genetic, moral, religious and economic.

Genetic and Moral Aspects

The parent-child bond is believed to have a physical as well as a supernatural or mystical basis. In the physical sense, the basic fact is that a child is begotten by its father and borne by its mother. The genetic relationship between mother and child is considered as a particularly close one. Throughout the period of pregnancy, and particularly during confinement, she not only suffers great physical discomfort but also runs the risk of losing her own life. After she 'brings it to life', the mother ensures the child's survival by feeding it on 'the milk of her breast'. The Pandits speak eloquently of their notion of *matri-rin,* the supreme 'debt' every human being owes to his mother for having 'given him life'. Not to speak of the father, even gods are said to take the second place, after the mother, in a human being's life. Mythological tales are recounted and actual happenings recalled to stress how love and consideration for one's mother's wishes bring the fulfilment of one's desires. Rather than address the mother as a goddess, the Pandits refer to goddesses, such as Uma, as 'the universal mother'. The men speak of their women as *bacha parast,* 'the devotees of children'. The women refer to their children as their 'womb' or 'entrails', and an 'own' child is distinguished from a step-child by being referred to as the child of one's womb or entrails.

The physical intimacy of the mother-child bond is regarded as being without parallel ; even the father's role as the begetter is much less stressed and sometimes made the subject of jocular comment in a manner the mother's role never is. Nevertheless, every human being owes his life to both his parents. Moreover, every Pandit man owes his social identity and status to his father. Mother-child relations partake of an emotional intensity which is not often achieved in father-child relations, but the father-son relationship is the very foundation of the Pandit kinship system.

The bonds of begetting and bearing are identical between

parents and all their children. But in the relations between particular children and their parents, the Pandits maintain that *hawalyat* (preordination) plays a mysterious and decisive role. Literally *hawalyat* means 'what is held in safe custody to be returned later'. The notion is a corollary of the Hindu concept of *karma* 'according to which any action whatsoever is the effect of a cause and in its turn the cause of an effect' (Zaehner 1962, p. 5). The notion of *karma* is, of course, inextricably bound up with that of transmigration. Understood in these terms, *hawalyat* means that the relations between parents and their particular children are governed by their mutual relations in their previous incarnations. The more general phrase *puru zanmuk lenden* ('the debit and credit of the previous life') also is commonly employed to explain the nature of interpersonal relations between kin, but *hawalyat* correctly refers to the parent-child relationship only. The Pandits assert that parents do their best for all their children; but it depends upon *hawalyat* whether all of them will survive, grow into dutiful sons and daughters, and bring comfort and happiness to their parents; or whether they will neglect, insult and hurt their parents and ruin their good name by misdoings. Similarly it is *hawalyat* which enables parents to rear one child better than another, owing to better economic and other circumstances, or arrange the marriage of one daughter into a better family than they are able to do in the case of her sisters.

But, because of its mysterious and unpredictable nature, *hawalyat* can never be anticipated and, therefore, should never be invoked as an excuse for the non-performance of various parental or filial duties. The calculation of immediate self-interest or the conditional performance of one's duties may be permissible in other situations, but the only true guide to parent-child relations is the absolute command of moral law. The immense moral prestige and authority of the parents *qua* parents flows from the fact of their having 'given life' to their children. But in their own actions towards their children they too are bound by the same moral law. The Pandits assert that sons are begotten for the accomplishment of the duty of providing male heirs who will continue the lineage, and offer food and pour libations to their manes. By begetting a son a man repays

the debt he owes his own father for having begotten him.[6] It is *dharma* (moral and religious duty) to marry in order to perform the rites of a householder and beget children ; it is *dharma* to bring up children without regard for self-interest ; and it is again *dharma* to love one's parents and obey them without flinching for fear of pain or loss.[7]

This is, of course, the ideal picture embodying the acknowledged norms of conduct. In practice parent-child relations do not always conform to the ideal pattern. Conflicts between parents and children are not uncommon, although they never become so acute as conflicts between siblings or remoter kin often do. Moreover, the Pandits themselves contrast between, what they call, *zyana-dod* (the tribulations of begetting and bearing) and *rachan-dod* (the toils of rearing), emphasizing the latter as the source of emotional attachment. As may be expected natural affection and personal interest do enter into parent-child relations independent of the requirements of morality.

The Nexus of Religious Rites

Parents and children are also bound together by the obligatory performance of religious rites. Such of these rites as are called the *sharirsamskar* ('rituals for the good of the body') are held to be essential for the spiritual development of the individual. The first of these, *kahanethar,* or purificatory birth rite, is performed twelve days after the birth of a child, or soon later, by its parents. A couple of years later boys get their first haircut (*zarakasai*) and girls have their ear lobes pierced (*kanchombun*). Pandit girls and women never cut their hair but let it grow long. Moreover, married women wear ear pendants called *atahor* as a sign of wifehood.

Boys are ritually initiated before they are 12 years old. *Mekhal,* or ritual initiation, consists of a series of rites and cere-

[6] Cf. Manu's dictum that a man should marry so that, among other 'gains', he may have sons and thus ensure 'heaven for himself and his ancestors' (Manu IX, 26). It may be here noted that the Sanskrit word for 'son' is '*putra*' (deliverer from hell).

[7] For a discussion of the various *purushartha* (aims of life) including *dharma*, see Zaehner (1962).

monies which are described in the next section. After his *mekhal* a boy enjoys the full ritual status of a Brahman ; he is now entitled to go through the ritual of marriage (*nethar*), cremate his parents, offer food and water to his manes, and, in the event of his own death, full cremation rites will be performed for him.

Girls do not go through an initiation rite and do not acquire full ritual status till they are married. The marriage ritual is preceded by a series of rites which the bride and the bridegroom go through in their respective homes. It is only after she goes through these rites that a girl can be given in marriage and full cremation rites performed for her. The parents of the bride and the bridegrocm respectively participate in these rituals along with their daughter and son. The marriage rites (which will be described in the next chapter) follow. The main rite consists of the giving of the bride by her father as a 'gift' to her future husband and the latter's acceptance of her as his wife. For a father this is a highly meritorious act and its performance a moral duty.

Finally, there are the *antimsamskar* (last rites) culminating in cremation. These are ideally performed by a man's (or woman's) eldest son ; a daughter is not permitted to cremate her parents. In the absence of a son a man is cremated by a male agnate, and a woman by a male agnate of her husband.

Besides the *sharirsamskar*, there are important rites for the benefit of the manes. For the year after death, a person's spirit travels towards the *pitra-lok* (land of manes) ; to assist it in its travels, rites are performed for 12 days after death and fortnightly for three months, and thereafter monthly for the rest of the year. After the first death anniversary libations (*tarpan*) are poured daily and food offerings (*shraddha*) are made bi-annually in the name of the manes. A man may pour libations in the name of any dead person, even unrelated friends, but he performs the *shraddha* rite only for his lineal ascendants. He offers *pinda* (cooked rice balls) and other eatables to six of his lineal male ascendants, beginning with his father, and to his mother, father's mother, FaFaMo, FaFaFaMo, FaFaFaFaMo, and FaFaFaFaFaMo. The striking feature of the food offerings made at one'e mother's *shraddha* is the exclusion of her manes, and her inclusion with the mothers of ego's agnatic ancestors. A man is,

however, permitted, if he so chooses, to make food offerings to his mother's parents; but the water and food received from a daughter's son are not adequate for the well-being of manes.

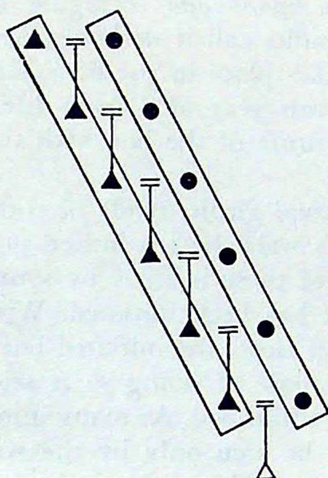


Fig. VII

Moreover, his offerings to them will cease with his death, as his sons are not obliged to continue the offerings; they rarely do so. Thus there is no substitute for one's own sons in this respect.

The performance of domestic religious rites by parents and by sons is regarded as a moral duty meritorious in itself and, therefore, self-rewarding. Only if the son is ritually purified after his birth, initiated, and married, will he be able to cremate his parents and beget sons who will continue the lineage and offer water and food to their manes. Further only if a man sets the example, by pouring libations and offering food to his lineage ancestors, may he hope that his sons will do the same when he is dead. Thus the religious rites performed in a Pandit home not only bind together parents and children, but also establish a continuity between past, present and future which surmounts death and immortalizes the lineage, as it were.

Ritual Initiation of Boys

We may now briefly describe the ritual initiation of boys and the reinforcement of the ties of kinship which takes place on this occasion.

It is the moral duty of every Pandit to initiate his sons into the ritual status of a Brahman. The ritual is performed by the castes of the *dvija* (twice-born) *varna* all over India and is generally known as *upanayana* (bringing nearer to spiritual knowledge). The Pandits call it *mekhal* (the investiture of the girdle). It usually takes place in the fifth, seventh, ninth or, at the latest, the eleventh year of a boy's life. The main ritual consists of the investiture of the boy with the *mekhal* and the *yagnopavit*.

The *mekhal,* or ritual girdle, made of cotton strands, is tied round the neophyte's waist by his father, grandfather, father's brother, or, if none of these is alive, by some other close male agnate, who himself has been initiated. With the help of his *mekhal* and a piece of cloth, the initiated boy is taught to cover his genitals. The purpose of doing so is said to be threefold. Firstly, to symbolize adulthood. As many informants put it, 'An adult's penis should be seen only by the woman he marries.' Secondly, the covering of the penis expresses the self-discipline and sexual abstinence which the Pandits expect an unmarried youth to exercise. And thirdly, to protect the genitals from harm due to accident and exposure, their preservation being essential for the pursuit of a householder's duty of begetting children.

The investiture of the *yagnopavit* follows that of the girdle. The *yagnopavit* is a cord of three strands of cotton symbolizing three 'ritual debts' the repayment of which provides the *raison d'être* of a Brahman's life. The debt to gods is repaid by offering oblations in their name; that to manes by offering them food and drink and begetting children; and that to holy sages by the acquisition of knowledge.[8] The *yagnopavit* is put over the boy's left shoulder and under his right arm by his grandfather or father. The boy is then introduced to spiritual, occult knowledge by the family priest who whispers into his right ear the sacred *gayatri,* a Vedic invocation to the supreme Brahma (see Colebrook 1873, I, pp. 145f., and Dowson 1950, pp. 112f.). Besides these principal rites, about 20 other rites, and also many non-Sanskritic ceremonies, are performed.

Six of the neophyte's kin have special roles to play on this

[8] Sanskritic sources generally mention five ritual debts and sacraments. For an interpretation see Kapadia (1958, pp. 30-33).

occasion. (*i*) His father's eldest married sister initiates the ceremonies and rites which last several days. (*ii*) His parents are the principal participants, besides himself, in the main investiture rites, unless his father surrenders this privilege to his own parents, or his elder brother. (*iii*) After he has heard the *gayatri* the neophyte ceremonially 'begs' for money from all his kith and kin, who gather at his home on this occasion, so that he can reward the family priest. He puts on the clothes of a mendicant and, with begging bowl and staff, goes to his mother's eldest sister and 'begs' for alms from her ; only afterwards does he 'beg' from his own parents and others. (*iv*) On the completion of all but the last rite, which is performed on the bank of a river, stream or spring, the boy's father's brother or his father's sister's husband ties a turban on his head. Then his mother's brother carries him in his lap to the site of the final rite. It may be pointed out that authoritarian roles are associated with the father's siblings and protective roles with the mother's siblings.[9]

The occasion is considered to be a source of joy in the boy's parents' sisters' lives, and they distribute milk and cakes among all the people present on the occasion. In return, they receive gifts from the boy's parents, but there is an important distinction between these prestations. The mother's sister receives gifts for being good and generous to the boy since what prompts her actions is believed to be love and sentiment ; the father's sister receives gifts as a matter of right and the role she plays in the rites and ceremonies is, feelings and sentiments apart, a token of her status as a female agnate. Sentiment and structural position thus give rise to social actions which are similar in form and content, but not wholly identical in intention and meaning.

Economic Rights and Obligations

The economic responsibility of rearing children rests with their natal household as a whole and not particularly with their own parents. A man who is a father is, however, expected to make a contribution to the income of the household, or make himself useful in some indirectly productive way, such as in a managerial role. He usually does so. The Pandits say that to be a parent

[9] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown 1924, pp. 542-55.

is the reverse of being a *shur* (child or immature person); one cannot be both. Parenthood invests a person with the prestige that goes with adulthood, but it also entails the assumption of one's responsibilities as an adult member of the household. If a grown-up man, unmarried or married, but without children, behaves in an irresponsible manner, he is often taunted by others by being reminded that had he been lucky he would have been a parent, and yet he behaves as if he were a *shur*.

The natal household of a child's mother sends occasional gifts of clothes, food and money for the child. But these prestations are symbolic in character; they are primarily an expression of the love of the maternal grandparents, and a token of a woman's residual rights in her natal household.

During the first few years of a child's life the costs of rearing mainly consist of expenditure on food and clothing and are not heavy. Till an infant is weaned, and afterwards also, it is not fed on any special foods. Weaning usually does not take place till after the child is two years of age. An earlier weaning becomes necessary if the mother's milk 'dries up' or if she becomes pregnant. There is no taboo on sexual intercourse between the parents of a suckling child.

Although they are sufficiently clothed, particularly in winter, special attention is not bestowed on making children's clothes attractive or comfortable. The many layers of cotton and woollen clothes in which an infant is swaddled are generally dirty as they are not changed for days, and even weeks, on end. A child may sometimes be dressed in the old clothes of an elder sibling, or another child of the household, who has grown out of them.

Expenses are also incurred on treatment during illness and on the performance of rituals. The Pandits of rural Kashmir still predominantly depend upon *yunani hikmat* (Greek medicine). The *hakeem* (physician) prescribes medicines (consisting mainly of various kinds of herbs, fruit and vegetable seeds, jams, dried or fermented flowers, and syrups) most of which are inexpensive and available at groceries.[10] Allopathic medicine is becoming

[10] The indigenous Hindu medicine of other parts of India, known as *ayurveda* (see Zimmer 1948), is absent in Kashmir. The *hikmat* probably came to Kashmir with Islam and superceded the *ayurvedic* system.

increasingly popular but is as yet both inaccessible and expensive. The nearest hospital is in the town of Anantnag, 11 miles away.

As for rituals, purificatory birth rites and ritual initiation, particularly the latter, involve considerable expenditure. Even more is spent on marriages; the marriage of a daughter may necessitate the borrowing of money by her natal household.

When children reach about the age of five or six, their formal instruction begins. Whereas girls stay at home and acquire various domestic skills by assisting older women of the household at their chores, boys are sent to the school at Utrassu. To maintain boys at school involves expenditure on books, school uniforms, and fees which are, however, nominal.

Boys who study at school also assist at home; they run errands, go shopping, work in the garden and occasionally even in the fields. Schools remain closed at harvest time all over rural Kashmir to enable the boys to assist their elders. But the time when boys make an important contribution to the income of the household comes only when they approach their twenties; free from their studies, they are then regarded as adults. As parents grow older, sons assume greater responsibilities under the direction of their father, and according to their own age and capabilities. If a household has no land and is dependent upon individual earners, the sons will have to support their parents by their own earnings after the father is too old to work. It is, in fact, regarded as the right of parents to be supported by their sons who, on their part, deem it a privilege to be able to do so. The Pandits say that sons are the solace of old age. In Utrassu-Umanagri there are 14 men, all above the age of 50 who exclusively depend upon the earnings of their son or sons (12 cases), brothers (one case) and brother's sons (one case).

Sons inherit property from their fathers (see Chapters 7 and 8). Under normal conditions daughters have only the right of maintenance till they are married, and subsequently only certain residual and contingent rights such as the right to occasional prestations. But if, in the absence of a son, a daughter is detained at her parental home after her marriage, and her

husband persuaded to live uxorilocally, then she has the same rights of inheritance as a son.

Grandparents, Parents and Children in Domestic Life

During the few weeks of recuperation after the birth of her child, a Pandit woman's physical and ritual conditions preclude her from doing much else, besides looking after the baby. Consequently, the baby is more with her than anybody else in the household.

About four weeks after confinement, when the mother resumes her normal routine of household work, other members of the household begin to take an increasing part in looking after the baby. From now onwards its paternal grandparents, rather than its own parents, play the predominant part in rearing it. The infant's mother is asked to suckle it when it cries, and she takes it to bed with her at night. For the rest, it is looked after by its grandparents, particularly the grandmother. Other members of the household, including the baby's older siblings, also give a helping hand in taking care of it.

The association between a child and its grandparents becomes closer after weaning. Henceforward it sleeps with one of the grandparents who are generally old enough not to be cohabiting regularly. The Pandits affirm that eating from the same plate and sleeping under the same quilt create and deepen affection. It is common to see a grandparent not merely feeding a grandchild from his (or her) plate, but also masticating the food before giving it to the latter.

The grandparents resent it if a child's own parents show 'undue' affection or concern for him. 'Why this *bevasayi* (fear and lack of confidence)? Who brought you up?' was the admonition I heard a grandmother administer to her son who was worrying about his sick child. According to the Pandit etiquette a man should not fondle his child in his own father's presence, though he may do so in his mother's presence, particularly if he has several children. The *paterfamilias* and his wife are regarded as the parents of the whole household, and the responsibility for the welfare of its members is primarily theirs. Within the household the ideal situation is one in which all regard themselves as equally related to each other. Actual

behaviour does not, of course, always come up to this standard. Thus the younger brothers of the *paterfamilias* do take a much greater interest in their own children than do his sons.

It is unusual for grandparents to be alive long after their grandchildren have attained adulthood. There are only three such households in Utrassu-Umanagri. Each of these includes a grandmother and her grandchildren above 15 years of age. There are no instances of grandfathers who have adult grandchildren. This demographic fact has an important social consequence; since serious tensions develop only between adults, strained relations between grandparents and grandchildren are virtually absent. If grandchildren are ill-treated by their grandparents, this will cause the latter to have strained relations with their own sons. At the same time, parents always admonish their children if the latter are rude to their grandparents. Thus, the intermediate generation operates as a social buffer between grandparents and grandchildren.

An important factor in how a couple treat the children of their various sons is the relations between the former and their daughters-in-law. Thus, Radhakrishan's parents showed little interest in his (their elder son) young children because of the strained relations they had with him and his wife. Moreover, they almost went out of their way to bestow care and attention on the daughter of their second son; so much so, indeed, that Radhakrishan's mother once severely scolded and hit her younger daughter-in-law because the latter had beaten her child for overturning a can full of oil.

On the whole, grandparents indulge their grandchildren, but they also discipline and instruct them. There is a feeling of familiarity between grandparents and grandchildren, but the relationship cannot be characterized as one of joking. A grandparent may scold and spank a child, and often does so. Nevertheless, grandparents, being old and experienced, are usually kinder towards young children, and better judges of their behaviour.

From about two to six years children spend most of their time in play; they are not asked to do any particular or heavy work, nor are they disciplined with a strong hand. They are, however, given such elementary instruction as how to perform

ablutions, eat food, change clothes, and so on. Through observation, imitation of adult behaviour, and from finding their actions approved or disapproved, the children learn to distinguish between right and wrong, and are thus conditioned to the norms of Pandit culture.

As already stated, formal instruction begins from the age of about six years. Henceforward, discipline and control of a child's actions are gradually increased.

Formerly (before 1912), when there was no school in or around Utrassu-Umanagri, none of the Pandits had any schooling. The rich families sent their sons to study with a tutor in the village, but the majority of boys were instructed in the 3 R's in their own households by their elders. Some of the boys never learnt even the rudiments of literacy. Nowadays, all boys attend the school, though not all of them stay there long enough (a minimum of ten years) to obtain the School Leaving Certificate. In recent years a number of boys have attended college in the town of Anantnag, and two of them have already graduated.[11]

When the boys return home from school, they spend some time studying their books and completing such home task as may be assigned to them by their teachers. They also assist in various domestic chores, and thus acquire knowledge of various adulthood responsibilities, such as visiting tenants, and assessing the condition of crops. There are no adult roles, except that of the priest, which require specialized training. A priest usually instructs his sons in priestcraft himself. Nowadays, they also attend school for secular education.

A girl's formal instruction also takes place at home. When their brothers and cousins start going to school, the mixed play-groups break up, and girls begin to associate more with older girls and women than with younger siblings. To begin with, a girl of six or seven only helps in holding a baby, fetching water, or such other light tasks, but in another four or five years she learns, by assisting older women, the various tasks of adult life such as cooking, washing, stitching, and milking cows.

[11] One of these graduates, Dwarkanath Pandit, obtained a first class Master's Degree in Statistics from the University of Delhi in 1960. About twenty years earlier, another boy, Prithvinath Chattah, passed the Master of Arts examination in Hindi; he has since migrated out of the village.

A girl may be married when she is 14 or 15, and her parents-in-law will expect her to do all household work. The older they grow, the more exclusively they associate with members of their own sex only, and are thus steeped in a feminine ethos[12] when quite young. The Pandits expect a nubile girl to be on reserved terms with even such close kinsmen as her elder brothers, father, paternal uncles and cousins. Daughters develop greater intimacy with and stronger affection for their mothers than any other member of their natal *chulah* ; and mothers depend greatly on the assistance and emotional support of their daughters. The Pandits assert that 'A mother without a daughter is a boat without an oar'.

The Pandit boys do not develop the kind of intimacy with their parents which the daughters do. A son also is, however, freer with his mother than with his father. A mother usually does not scold or exercise authority over a grown-up son ; she almost treats him with respect. Sons in their turn usually show greater affection for their mothers than for their fathers.

But the relations between a step-mother and a step-son are generally strained. The Pandits regard step-mothers as selfish and cruel. Stories are told of step-mothers who tried to poison their step-sons and forced them to leave their homes or claim partition from their fathers. The Pandits say that step-mothers convert natural fathers into step-fathers. Nevertheless, in practice, all step-mothers do not conform to the stereotype. Thus, though Mahadev obtained partition from his father because of his inability to pull on with his step-mother, and Premnath (village Vangam) ran away from home for the same reason, Ratan (14) is apparently being well looked after by his step-mother who has a daughter of her own.

Formerly, when widow remarriage was not permitted, there were no step-fathers in Pandit society. But in the last two decades several widows with children have remarried in Utrassu-Umanagri and elsewhere. No definite pattern of relations has as yet emerged in the relations between step-fathers and step-

[12] Cf. '. . . the women's ethos is no doubt formed in part by their pre-occupation with the routines of . . . (various domestic chores including) child-rearing, and by the association of girls with older women who have already adopted the ethos' (Bateson 1958, p. 175).

children. In one of the instances of widow remarriage in Utrassu-Umanagri, the widow has adult children by her first husband and they reside separately from her and their step-father. In fact, they refuse to acknowledge any relationship with their mother's second husband.

'The three generations are to the domestic family', said Sarwanand, 'what the three storeys are to the house. The children are the groundfloor : the whole edifice is built upon them and for them. And the grandparents are like the protective roof on top of the third floor.'

6

Recruitment to the Household : (2) Marriage and Incorporation

I

Importance and Nature of Marriage

The Pandits regard marriage as one of the most important events in the life of an individual; unless a man is married he will not be able legitimately to beget sons, and thus ensure the continuance of the ritual offerings of food and drink to his manes. Begetting sons, though supremely important as a moral obligation is, however, by no means the only legitimate purpose for which a Pandit seeks a wife. The gratification of sexual desire, the mutual love of spouses, and the joy and comfort of domestic life also make married life a highly desired state of existence for a man. Bachelors are much pitied in Pandit society.

The Pandits' attitude toward the gratification of sexual desire in wedlock is ambivalent ; it is regarded as both essential and desirable, but by itself it is held to be an insufficient ground for marriage. Although bachelorhood is deplored and claims of celibacy are seldom believed, yet abstinence is much prized as the trait which, if exercised, marks off man from animals. 'But in the actualities of life', said Bishambarnath, 'woman and gold (*kamini-kanchan*) underlie all human actions which are not motivated by hunger.'

Not all bachelors adopt sons for religious purposes, and thus show utter disregard for their own and their ancestors' welfare in the life-hereafter. Sarwanand (50), one such bachelor, provided the justification in the following words: 'Having been denied the joy which marriage brings in this life, what do I care for the happiness an adoptive son can afford me in the life hereafter' (by providing me ritual oblations and continuing the line of descent through me) ? It is not, therefore, surprising that

of the 12 bachelors of Utrassu-Umanagri who are above 30 years of age, and have hardly any hope of getting married, none has adopted a son.

For a woman, marriage is the beginning of the fulfilment of her life. The destiny of the Pandit woman is motherhood, and wifehood is the only culturally approved means to it. She begins her adult and the socially significant phase of her life only with her marriage, which also marks her initiation into the full ritual status of a Brahman woman. Only thereafter can she participate, alongside of her husband, in domestic rituals, receive full cremation rites, and join the manes.

It is the moral duty of parents to arrange for the marriage of their children, particularly their daughters. Few things are more blameworthy than to have nubile daughters in the household; and the giving of a virgin in marriage is held to be an act loaded with religious merit. The two oldest unmarried Pandit girls of the village are respectively 20 and 18 years of age.

Pandit marriage is a systematically organized compact between two households, and not the result of mutual choice by, or agreement between, the two persons to be married. It brings together not only two individuals and two households, but also two families. Further, though in itself the very opposite of kinship, it gives rise to cognatic ties between the families and the households concerned after children are born to the couple. Therefore, as may be expected, the establishment of affinal ties between households is governed by a set of well-defined prescriptions and preferences.

Selection of Spouses: Prescription

For a Pandit marriage with a Muslim is permanently polluting, and, therefore, out of question, unless he is willing to leave his household, sever all ties of kinship, and renounce his religion. Such renunciation entails the loss of all property rights. In both the cases of a Pandit having married a Muslim woman, which I was able to record in the course of my fieldwork,[1] the man had embraced Islam before his marriage. The Koran forbids a

[1] Only one of these men belongs to Utrassu-Umanagri but does not live there any more.

Muslim to marry a follower of such religions as permit idol worship and do not have a revealed book (see Fyzee 1955, p. 79); and Hinduism falls in this category.

A Pandit is expected, and desires, to marry in his own subcaste of *karkun* or *gor*. Since there are no Hindus in Kashmiri villages who are not Pandits, the possibility of establishing affinal ties with non-Brahmans is remote.

The shortage of Pandit women in rural areas has occasionally led an individual, placed in exceptional circumstances, to marry a non-Pandit woman. The first such marriage of a man belonging to Utrassu-Umanagri took place 50 years ago when a widower, who was employed in the neighbouring district of Kishtwar (outside the Valley but within the State), married a Brahman woman there. After living with her for several years he brought her to the village. It is said that orthodoxy received a big blow when this marriage was approved by Shankar Pandit, the most respected scholar of the village at that time. Since then one more widower of the village has similarly obtained a wife from Kishtwar. Although these offenders have not suffered any social ostracism, their action has been much criticized. In the latter case the wife was suspected to be a non-Brahman, and, therefore, many villagers refused to accept food in her house for some time after her arrival. By an odd chance neither of these two women have borne their husbands any children.

It may be here mentioned that the Brahmans of Kishtwar claim descent from Pandit immigrants, and speak a dialect of Kashmiri. But the Pandits regard them as a distinct group.

As for marriages between the *karkun* and the *gor*, inquiries in several villages, including Utrassu-Umanagri, did not yield a single instance of it. The only two cases that I was able to record had both occurred recently in the city of Srinagar, and were exceptional.

The rule of endogamy thus limits the choice to one's own subcaste; but within the subcaste there are obligatory rules of exogamy. The broadest of these rules is the prohibition of marriage within the *gotra*.

Under the influence of Indologists, the sociologists and social anthropologists working in India have regarded the *gotra* to be

the same as clan ; consequently, the two terms are generally used as synonyms. But it is doubtful if the Brahmanic *gotra* is a grouping of kin, or a clan. I have elsewhere examined this problem at some length on the basis of Pandit usage (see Madan 1962a). Suffice it here to state that the Pandits are divided into many *gotra*,[2] and the members of each such category are named after one or more pseudo-historical or mythological founding sages from whom they claim descent. But the members of the same *gotra* do not regard themselves as kin in the normal sense of the term. A man's *gotra* name is the same as that of his father and other male agnates, but a married woman belongs to her husband's *gotra*. Membership of a *gotra*, which is acquired by boys at the time of ritual initiation, and by girls at the time of marriage, entails no other mutual rights and obligations between the members except that they shall not enter into marital alliances. In other words, a man should not obtain a wife for himself, his sons, or other wards, who are his agnates, from a family which has the same *gotra* name as his own.[3]

The view of *gotra* which would be readily accepted by the Pandits is that of the historian Basham who describes it as 'a brahmanic institution . . . the chief importance of (which) was in connexion with marriage, which was forbidden to persons of the same gotra' (1954, pp. 153f.). Basham also points out that the earlier law givers did not equate a breach of *gotra* exogamy with incest ; the Pandits also do not do so.

Though the Pandits usually avoid marriages within the *gotra*, they are not inflexible if a match is eminently desirable from every other point of view. Two courses are open in such circumstances. Either the marriage takes place and is followed by expiatory rites ; or, more often, the bride is given away in marriage by her mother's brother who acts in place of her father. His *gotra* will not be the same as that of the bride's father and prospective husband unless, of course, the bride's

[2] Lawrence (1895, p. 304) mentions 18 levite and 103 *karkun gotra* groups. Koul (1924) writes that there are 199 such groups (p. 20) but the list he gives (pp. 86-92) contains only 189 names. In Utrassu-Umanagri there are 16 *gotra* several of which are not to be found in Koul's list.

[3] Cf. 'According to the relevant text of Yajnavalkya, the bride must not be descended from one whose *gotra* . . . (is) the same as the bridegroom's' (Mayne, 1953, p. 160).

father himself has married within his own *gotra*. But that is unlikely as such circumvention of the rule of *gotra* exogamy is very rare. The pretence of observing an obligatory rule of exogamy is thus maintained.

A more important prescription is that of *sapinda* exogamy according to which a man should not marry a woman who is a *sapinda* (literally, 'connected by having in common particles of one body' [Mayne 1953, p. 147]) of his mother or father. This rule excludes marriage between ego and his (or her) own agnates of six ascendant generations, and his (or her) mother's agnates of four ascendant generations (see Fig. VIII).[4]

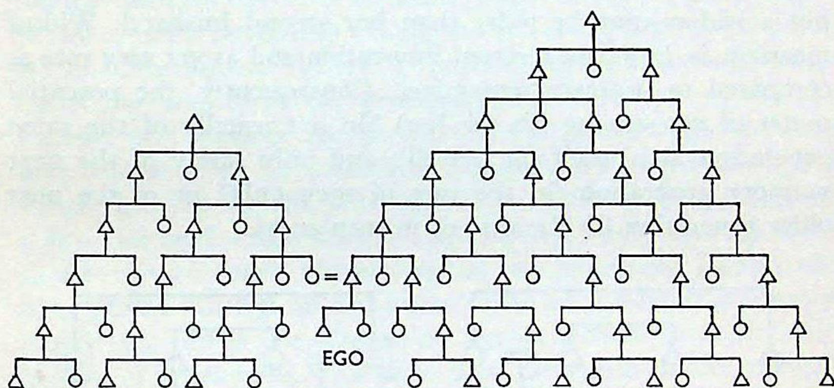


Fig. VIII

But the Pandits rarely care to remember all genealogical ties beyond three ascendant generations. Further, not all of them can fully state the rule of *sapinda* exogamy ; they depend upon

[4] Brahman law givers have variously interpreted the rule of *sapinda* exogamy. For details, see Karandikar (1929, Chaps. IX and X) and Kapadia (1947, Chaps. II and VIII). The rule as stated above is based upon the Mitakshara (Vijnaneshwar's commentary upon Yajnavalkya's texts) (see Mayne 1953, pp. 146f.), which is the family law applicable to the Pandits. The Hindu Marriages Act (No. XXV) of 1955 lays down the legal position as follows:

'3(f) (i) *Sapinda* relationship with reference to any person extends as far as the third generation (inclusive) in the line of ascent through the mother, and the fifth (inclusive) in the line of ascent through the father, the line being traced upwards in each case from the person concerned, who is to be counted as the first generation ; . . . '.

their priests to do so. They emphasize that what matters in practice is that a man does not marry any known kinswoman, particularly if she belongs to the same lineage as himself. Though it is undesirable to do so, yet, in exceptional circumstances, non-agnatic cognates may marry, but only if they are more distantly related than as second degree cousins, or second degree cousin once removed and uncle or aunt. The kinship term for a second degree cousin includes the affix *ter* (feminine) or *tur* (masculine) twice, and the Pandits say that where two or more *ter* (ascendant generations) intervene, the kin may marry (see Fig. IX and Appendix I ; also see Madan 1963a, pp. 269-73).

In normal circumstances the husband is older than the wife, but a widow may be older than her second husband. Widow marriage is, however, a recent innovation and as yet very rare as compared to widower remarriage. Consequently, the potential mates of ego among his (or her) kin are usually of the same generation as himself (or herself), and only rarely of the next younger generation (in the case of men only), or of the next older generation (in the case of women only).

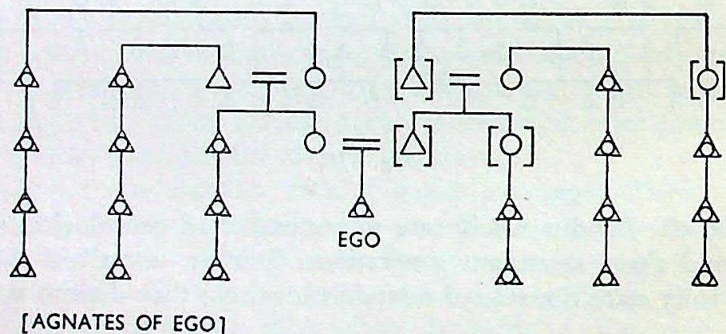


Fig. IX

There are, of course, no instances of marriage between agnates in the village of Utrassu-Umanagri. But there are three instances of marriage between non-agnatic kin. Two of these were arranged in knowledge of the ties of kinship which were remote in both cases. The proposed wife was, in one case, her prospective husband's FaFaFaBrDaDaDaSoDa (no kinship term, but he could have called her father *pitur-poftur-poftur-byanther*),

and, in the other case, her prospective husband's FaFaMoSiDa SoDaDa (*master-pofter-piter-byanzi*). The presence of three *tur* in the former term and three *ter* in the latter may be noted, indicating three intervening ascendant generations in each case. In the third instance the genealogical relationship between wife and husband was a degree closer, the husband having been his wife's FaMoSiSoSo (*mastur pitur-boi*), but this was discovered many years after marriage, and nothing was done by way of expiation.

As already stated, although all bearers of a *gotra* name are not *ipso facto* kin—in Utrassu-Umanagri two agnatically unrelated families have the common *gotra* name of Dattatreya—, yet all agnates invariably belong to the same *gotra*. Consequently, the observance of the rule of *gotra* exogamy prevents even an unwitting breach of the prohibition on marriage within the lineage, and renders the preservation of genealogies unnecessary. Considering the structural importance of agnation in the Pandit kinship system, it is only to be expected that a dependable social mechanism should exist to preserve the mutual exclusion between agnatic kinship on the one hand, and affinity and non-agnatic kinship on the other.[5] One of the basic notions of Pandit kinship is the distinction between those members of a family, or household, who have been born into it (the *zamati*), and those who have been married into it (the *amati*). A person who falls in one category cannot be included in the other; that is the basic rule prohibiting incestuous unions.

Selection of Spouses: Preferences

Compelled by custom to part with them, the Pandit parents take great care in the selection of the future homes of their daughters. Custom lays down that the proposal for a marriage should come from the girl's parents. They try to ensure that the households into which their daughters are married should at least have, as the Pandits put it, *hakh-bata* ('greens and rice', the staples of Pandit diet), i.e. they should not be so poor as to be in need of the basic necessities of life. The marriage of one's daughters into households of higher socio-economic standing is coveted as it is

[5] In this respect *gotra* names are functionally similar to the spear names of the Nuer (see Evans-Pritchard 1951, p. 30).

one of the ways in which a *chulah* may raise its own status. But there is general agreement that too much of disparity between the girl-giving and the girl-receiving households is not desirable ; not only may a much richer household expect heavy prestations from its daughter-in-law's natal *chulah,* but its members may also ill-treat and taunt her for her lowly origins.

The parents of a son are not so limited in their ambitions. The richer a daughter's parents and the higher their social status, the more her parents-in-law stand to gain by such an alliance. The norms of behaviour between affinally related households require of the girl-giving *chulah* to be humble towards their daughter's relatives-in-law.

Besides economic well-being, the quality which renders a household desirable as future *sonya* (the relatives-in-law of ego's children) is its noble ancestry. A household is said to be *khandani* ('of noble lineage') if its ancestors have been illustrious men, and if its present male members are renowned for their piety, devotion to religion and good connexions, if not also for economic prosperity. The general attitude of the Pandit parents may be summed up as follows: A man must seek *sonya* who are rich and illustrious so that he can fall back upon them when in need, and boast of his good connexions.

The individual qualities of boys and girls do not receive much attention. If a household and the family to which it belongs are satisfactory, the children, it is believed, are bound to be well-bred. Physical defects are a hindrance in finding a wife for a man, but a girl never faces spinisterhood for such a reason ; not only is marriage obligatory for a woman, but a husband can also always be found for her. Nevertheless, the parents of a physically defective girl may have to wait long before they can find a match for her, or they may have to give her to a man who is himself old or physically defective. Leucoderma is much feared in Kashmir and regarded as an infectious disease. Raghunath (village Vangam) had to wait till his leucodermic daughter was in her twenties before he could find a man who also had leucoderma, and to whom she was married. A 16 year old girl of Umanagri who is blind in one eye was married in 1957 to a 39 year old widower of Utrassu. Their wealth may help a *chulah* to arrange the marriage of a physically

defective girl without much difficulty. Shamlal (of the town of Mattan) told me that a real grief in his life was that his wife was hunch-backed. He blamed his parents for having caused him lifelong misery, and asserted that they did so because of the substantial 'dowry'[6] which was promised to them.

The individual qualities of a human being are believed to be ultimately determined by the arrangement of planets in his or her horoscope. Accordingly, a preliminary step which has to be taken by a girl's household, before negotiations for marriage may be opened, is to send a priest to the chosen household and request it for a copy of the boy's horoscope. This is done without revealing the identity of the household which makes the request. A priest or astrologer is then asked to determine if the horoscopes of the girl and her proposed husband are compatible. The expert calculates the malignant influence which the planets of the two persons will have on one another's future. If the evil planets are believed to balance each other then the match is pronounced as acceptable. The most important event to guard against is the girl's widowhood as there is no greater misfortune which may befall a Pandit woman. The tallying of horoscopes in other details may not be always possible. The *gor* do not usually compare horoscopes because of the limitation of their small numbers.

It seems that, in past times, a prospective son-in-law received as little personal attention as a prospective daughter-in-law receives nowadays. But a significant change has now taken place in this regard as a consequence of recent political and economic changes in the Valley. Educated men and active earners are now preferred to the barely literate and indolent sons of rich landed families. Ownership of land is no longer regarded as a guarantee of economic security.

New criteria of determining the status of households are also emerging as a consequence of the politico-economic changes mentioned above. There is a greater stress on economic prosperity with a corresponding decline in the value set on a family being well-known for ritual piety, scholarship or distinguished

[6] Since a new household is not set up following marriage, the word 'dowry' is employed in this book to designate the property which a woman brings to her husband's parental household (of which he is a member).

ancestors. A particular proposal may be made because of the promising future of the prospective son-in-law, or accepted in preference to others, because of the hope of receiving a considerable dowry. Even political considerations have begun to motivate the choice of affinal alliances. Shamlal of Utrassu-Umanagri encouraged a Pandit of another village to propose marriage of the latter's daughter with the former's brother, although the girl's household was neither as well-to-do as the boy's, nor as well-known in the region. Shamlal, who has the ambition of becoming an active politician, explained to me that the other Pandit had similar ambitions and was a hindrance to the spread of his own influence. It may be here explained that had the marriage taken place, which it did not, Shamlal's influential rival would have been at a permanent disadvantage *vis-à-vis* Shamlal because, as the latter's brother's wife's father, he would have been expected to be deferential towards his daughter's relatives-in-law, such behaviour being customary among the Pandits (see Madan 1961a).

Village Exogamy

The prescriptions and preferences noted above may entail village exogamy, which is, however, also preferred for its own sake.[7] Of the 150 cases inquired into in Utrassu-Umanagri, 30 (20 per cent) marriages had taken place within the village, 111 (74 per cent) within a radius of 15 miles, and only in nine cases (6 per cent) marital ties had been established with more distant villages.

Generally speaking, the Pandits of a village prefer to give their daughters in marriage in nearby villages, though not in their own village. They are thus able to maintain close contacts with the female agnates who marry out ; proximity facilitates mutual visiting and prevents the withering away of affective ties. A marital alliance between households of two widely separated

[7] Writing about eastern Uttar Pradesh, where he says village exogamy is 'virtually automatic', Gould lists the following as causes: 'caste endogamy', 'territorial stabilization of kin groups', '*gotra* exogamy', and 'the tendency to regard affinal and consanguineal kinship ties as mutually exclusive' (1960, pp. 476-91 and 1961, pp. 297-300). See also Berreman (1962, pp. 55-58) for an instance of the absence of village exogamy.

villages often raises suspicions about the worthiness of the bride and the bridegroom. As an informant put it, 'Why should you send a daughter 20 or 30 miles away if you do not want to conceal something about her or your family? And why should you obtain a wife from a distant village unless you want her for an old widower, an imbecile, or a physically handicapped person?' Many questions were asked in Utrassu-Umanagri when Ram married his daughter in a village about 35 miles away. Vasadev, one of the aristocratic Pandits of the village, was at pains to explain to me why his deceased father Telak had been married to a woman belonging to a distant village: 'It was my father's accidental meeting with his prospective father-in-law at a centre of pilgrimage, and the fact of the latter being greatly impressed with my father's religious devotions, which brought about the union.' This woman later died and Telak had remarried in his own village, Vasadev being the second wife's son.

When it comes to bringing a daughter-in-law into one's home, marital alliances with relatively distant villages are not disfavoured too much. Moreover, the relative shortage of women of marriageable age often enables a girl's parents to pick and choose a son-in-law, whereas a boy's parents have less freedom of choice. But when *reciprocal* marriages are arranged, as is frequently done, a daughter is given in exchange for a daughter-in-law, ruling out any discrimination.

Regarding intra-village alliances, the Pandits say that for a family to have their *sonya* in their own village is unwelcome for several reasons. Firstly, an easy and quick access to her natal household stands in the way of a woman's speedy acceptance of her conjugal *chulah* as her home, and consequently retards her assimilation into it. Secondly, *sonya* are expected to have formal relations with each other, at least during the first few years of the relationship. In their mutual relations custom demands deference and humility from the natal family of a woman *vis-à-vis* her conjugal family. The parents of a woman are expected to send gifts to their daughter's relatives-in-law on specified occasions. They are also expected to accept any harsh treatment of their daughter by her parents-in-law as inevitable. At the same time every household tries to show off its superiority, in terms of social prestige and economic standing, over every other

household with which it has affinal ties. There is thus a conflict between the kind of behaviour customary between *sonya* and that usually associated with co-residence in the same village. Finally, the Pandits say that it is conducive to better relations between *sonya,* and an easier assimilation of a woman into her conjugal family, if they do not know of the skeletons in each other's cupboards. But it is difficult to keep family misfortunes and disgraces a secret from the other households of one's own village. Therefore, *sonya* in one's own village are said to be as unwelcome as 'boulders in the yard and a flood in the garden'.

Affinal ties with the Pandits of the city of Srinagar are regarded by villagers as a source of prestige but are not actively sought in view of their consciousness of a difference between rural and urban manners, styles of life and world views. Moreover, the city-dwellers also are usually unwilling to marry from or into villages. Only two women of Utrassu-Umanagri have been married into Srinagar in the last 50 years, and no wife has been obtained from there. Although the town of Anantnag is only 11 miles away from Utrassu-Umanagri, and the Pandits of the towns are more akin to villagers than city-dwellers, there are only five women in the village whose natal homes are in Anantnag, and only eight living women of the village have been married into that town. The preference for village exogamy within a limited area thus tends to limit ties of kinship and affinity within adjacent villages. These inter-village ties between families have the open-ended character of a 'network' (see Barnes 1954, pp. 43f).

Negotiations for Marriage

According to custom the parents of a Pandit boy are not expected to take the initiative in starting negotiations for his marriage. They usually wait for proposals of marriage to be made to them by the parents of nubile daughters. On the basis of my sociological census of Utrassu-Umanagri, the average age of a girl at the time of her marriage is 16 years, *i.e.* a couple of years after menarche. The number of unmarried girls above the age of 14 in the village is 19, and only three of them are above 17 years.

Physical maturity is not the main determinant of the timing

of a boy's marriage, the average age at marriage being 24 years. The sons of prosperous households are usually married at an earlier age, but nowadays, in the majority of cases, until a young man starts contributing to the household income his marriage is less likely to take place than it used to be.

In fact, child marriages, now banned by law, were fairly common a generation or two ago. I was able to record only one such marriage from an adjacent village in the course of my stay in Utrassu-Umanagri.

The suitability of a household into which a daughter may be married having been determined, the head of the proposing household makes a formal proposal, through a priest or a common friend or relative, to the head of the chosen household. The final decision for the acceptance of the proposal rests with that household itself, though its members usually consult their kith and kin before announcing their acceptance. The extent to which kin who are not members of the household influence the decision depends upon their actual relations with the *chulah* rather than their genealogical relationship with its members.

The proposing household is expected to keep on pressing the other household for a decision, whose members, foreshadowing their future dominant role, may unconscionably delay it. If the proposal is accepted, negotiations proceed to fix a date for the marriage.

In case of reciprocal marriages the negotiations usually include a detailed discussion of the terms of exchange. Each household is expected to give ornaments, clothes, domestic utensils to its daughter and presents to her relatives-in-law; the details are settled beforehand in such marriages. The age of the persons to be married, and their qualifications and defects enter into the bargaining. Similarly when a marriage involves payments for various purposes to be made by the prospective relatives-in-law of a girl to her natal household, the exact value, mode and timing of the payment are discussed and agreed upon beforehand. Throughout the negotiations men play the public roles and women remain in the background, but they exercise an influence equal to that of men in making choices and in arriving at decisions.

8

Types of Marriage

There are three types of marriage among the Pandits. The ideal is represented by marriage with a 'dowry' (ornaments and clothes for the bride, domestic utensils and other gifts in cash and kind for her relatives-in-law). The Pandits say that such a marriage is unsullied by any elements of bargaining on either side. But the incidence of reciprocal marriages, involving the exchange of women and gifts, gives them considerable importance for they are the commonest type of marriage. The third type of marriage involves payments in cash and/or kind by the girl-receiving *chulah* to the girl-giving *chulah*. These payments may be intended to provide for the marriage expenses or part thereof, or may be a bride price in the literal sense of the term.

In 1957 nine persons of Utrassu-Umanagri, five men and four girls were married. Eight of these were married in four reciprocal marriages. The incidence of the various types of marriages in the village (as represented by 108 couples, 27 widows and 13 widowers) is given in Table VII.

TABLE VII

INCIDENCE OF VARIOUS TYPES OF MARRIAGE

Type of Marriage	*Incidence*	*Approximate percentage of total number of marriages*
Marriage with dowry	56	38
Reciprocal marriages	67	45
Marriages involving payment of consideration to the girl-giving household	25	17
TOTALS	148	100

There are several reasons for the greater frequency of reciprocal marriages. Considering that for some time past there have been

more males than females among the Pandits of Kashmir,[8] it has been rather difficult to find wives for all men. The disparity in sex ratio has been aggravated, in the villages particularly, by two factors. Firstly, although the Pandits are strictly monogamous, yet the widowers have had the ritual and customary right to remarry, but the widows have not had the same privilege. There are 16 men in Utrassu-Umanagri who have married a second time after the first wife's death. There is also one man who is now living with his third wife. The first case of widow remarriage took place about 20 years ago. At present there are six women in the village who have married for a second time and one who has married a third time after being widowed twice.

Secondly, many a Pandit from Srinagar, unable to get married there, obtains a wife from a village; but city-dwellers do not marry their daughters into villages.[9] The rural Pandits have resorted to reciprocal marriages as a means of ensuring wives and daughters-in-law for as many households as can offer women in exchange. The genealogies collected by me reveal that the practice is by no means a recent one. Another likely reason for reciprocal marriages is that these eliminate the possibility of the extortion of gifts from a woman's natal household by her parents-in-law. Each side fears reprisals by the other, and the conflicts which are usually associated with the relations between affinally related households remain somewhat in check.

The Pandits agree that reciprocal marriages offend against the basic notion of marriage being the ritual gift of a daughter to her chosen husband. Nothing, it is said, should be accepted in return for such a gift. But whereas a minority of the Pandits, usually those belonging to the aristocratic families, criticize reciprocal marriages as ritually and socially improper, the majority justify them on grounds of expediency and social survival.

It may appear that this is yet another case of a difference

[8] In 1961, 48,922, or 55 per cent of the 89,102 Hindus of Kashmir were males. In Utrassu-Umanagri, the proportion of the Pandit males to the females in 1941 at the time of the census was 51.3 per cent which had by March 1957 changed to 54.75 per cent.

[9] The differential in the age of first marriage (see above, pp. 112f.) must, however, offset to some extent the effect of the above two factors. Assuming equal mortality, women are marriageable for eight years longer than men.

between the Sanskritic and local traditions, but there is more to it than that. Those Pandits who oppose reciprocal marriages complain that the element of bargaining involved in such marriages is unseemly and incompatible with the formal relations which should ideally obtain between *sonya*. In 1957 Surya of Umanagri arranged the marriage of his daughter in the village of Nanil in exchange for a wife for his son. It was agreed that he would first fetch his daughter-in-law from Nanil and then receive the bridegroom for his daughter in his house. I accompanied Surya to Nanil along with about 40 other people. In the middle of the night I was woken up by some commotion. On inquiry I found that a dispute had arisen between Surya and the other household over the insufficiency of the ornaments the former had taken with him for his daughter-in-law. Intervention by Surya's co-villagers and others saved the situation.

Further, social norms are breached when the daughter-giving and the wife-receiving households are equated, as happens when they exchange women. As will be seen from what follows, a confusion of roles takes place, through their involution, in such situations.

In the great majority of reciprocal marriages men exchange their sisters or cousins. All the instances of reciprocal marriage in Utrassu-Umanagri fall into this category. The arrangement places the parents and the siblings, and, in fact, all other kin of the exchanged women in 'double' and incompatible roles: thus a brother is his sister's husband's sister's husband; a sister her brother's wife's brother's wife; a father (mother) is his (her) daughter's husband's sister's father(mother)-in-law; and cross cousins are related in both the possible ways (see Fig. X).

In the Pandit society a man is deferential towards his sister's husband, but there is an element of familiarity in his attitude towards his wife's brother, particularly if the latter is of the same age as himself or younger. Similarly, a couple are deferential towards the parents-in-law of their daughter, but assume a domineering attitude towards the parents of their daughter-in-law. Finally, a person has more intimate relations with his mother's brother's children than with his father's sister's children; the former belong to his *matamal* (mother's natal household) with whom he has closer relations, outside his own natal household,

than with any other grouping of kin. The latter distinction of roles is less clear than the former two, but nevertheless an important one. All these distinct categories of kin get entangled together as a consequence of reciprocal marriages.

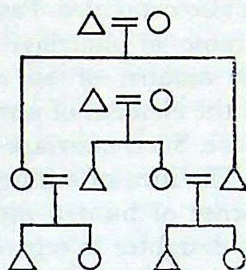


Fig. X

The confusion of roles is even more confounded when an inter-generation exchange takes place. By exchanging his daughter with a man's sister, Vasaboi (village Khrev) became his brother-in-law's father-in-law, and the latter became related to the same woman as husband and uncle (step-mother's brother)! Such exchanges are, however, rare, and unreservedly condemned by the villagers. I was able to record only three instances from villages other than Utrassu-Umanagri. Two of these involved priests whose limited numbers make remarriages particularly difficult to arrange. According to the Pandits, a man who is old enough to have a nubile daughter of his own ought not to seek a wife.

In the attitude towards reciprocal marriages may be seen an unresolved social problem of Pandit rural society. Being married is desirable from all points of view: physical, emotional, cultural and ritual. But the difficulty of finding wives for all men often necessitates arrangements which conflict with certain basic notions of kinship. It would seem that two sets of values have been prevalent among the rural Pandits for many generations. On the one hand, there have been the aristocratic families who have disapproved of reciprocal marriages, emphasizing the unseemly social situations these give rise to. On the other, there have been the majority of the Pandits who have attached

greater importance to the various advantages of such marriages than to their disadvantages.

Marriages involving payment, in cash or kind, to the girl's household by her future husband, or his *chulah,* are not only infrequent (17 per cent of the total number of marriages in Utrassu-Umanagri) but also concealed. Payments may be received for the stipulated purpose of marriage expenses (mainly for dowry), or without the manner of use and expenditure being specified. In either case the element of purchase is present, but of sale only in the latter case. Such marriages are held to be against *dharma* and morality. The idea of selling a child is very repugnant to the Pandits' sense of human dignity, and a man who receives money for his daughter is regarded as one fallen very low. A man who buys himself a wife is generally a widower, or a bachelor of advanced age, who has given up all hopes of marriage by the usual means. He does not feel any pride in being rich enough to buy himself a wife; instead he suffers from a sense of shame that he has to do so. In short, selling a daughter shames a parent, and buying a wife does a man no credit. It is extreme poverty and the presence of several nubile daughters in the household which compel it to resort to this kind of marriage. The parents never make such a proposal but accept it when it is made to them. Though the negotiations for purchase take place in great secrecy, news about it leaks out sooner or later through the intermediaries who are instrumental in settling the terms of the marriage.

'Promise-Giving' and Betrothal Ceremonies

Affluent households regard it a matter of prestige to announce a forthcoming wedding by holding a betrothal (*gandun,* 'binding') ceremony. Poorer *chulahs* tend to avoid it. Some consideration or other—e.g. the young age of the girl or the boy, a year of poor harvests and high prices, a sudden death in one of the households, or the inauspiciousness of the impending part of the year—may, however, necessitate postponement of marriage after the match has been settled upon. In such cases a betrothal, or the simple and less expensive 'promise-giving' (*takh dyun*) or 'oath' (*driykasam*) ceremony usually takes place. Neither ceremony is finally binding upon the two parties, either of whom may revoke

it. If many valuable and durable gifts have been exchanged between the betrothal and its dissolution, the same will be returned even if they have been made use of. These gifts usually consist of clothes and gold ornaments.

For reasons already mentioned, 'promise-giving' is more common than betrothal. A party of a dozen or so men from the boy's side visit the girl's household. There they are served the midday meal if they have come from another village ; otherwise tea and cake are deemed adequate for the occasion. After the pleasantries are over, the leader of the visiting party (usually the oldest man) formally asks the *paterfamilias* of the girl's household to promise that the chosen girl will be given in marriage to their boy. The promise is formally given, and then small gifts, sometimes only flowers and dry fruits, are exchanged between the two parties as a token of the solemn agreement just entered into.

A betrothal is more elaborate ; gifts of considerable value are exchanged and both the households give feasts to their kith and kin.

The Marriage Ritual

The Pandits maintain that marriage is one of the rituals for the spiritual good of the human body. A series of rites, performed in two parts, constitute the ritual of marriage. Most of the rites are of Sanskritic origin. A few apparently non-Sanskritic ceremonies also are performed, but the Pandits themselves do not distinguish between rites as Sanskritic and non-Sanskritic. We may now describe what the Pandits regard as the more important of these rites and ceremonies. The explanations given are based on what they themselves believe rather than on an interpretation of Sanskrit texts.

A ritual of pacification is performed for the bride and the bridegroom in their respective homes a couple of days, but never more than seven days, before the solemnization of the marriage. The purpose of this ritual is to intercede with gods and evil spirits so that supernatural interference may not preclude the performance of the marriage rituals proper. In the case of the bride, it is also the occasion for the performance of nine other rites, which should have been ideally performed between her

birth and marriage. Subsequently, the bridegroom, accompanied by close kin, neighbours and friends, goes to the home of the bride on an appointed and auspicious day for the wedding.

The performance of rituals on this occasion takes most of a day or an evening and the night. A fire is lit to serve as a divine witness (fire has a presiding deity, the god Agni), purifying agent and the conveyor of food offerings to gods. This act at once establishes the religious character of the rite. The bridegroom is then called upon, by the bride's father, to accept *kanyadan* (ritual gift of a virgin). Only a virgin may be given in marriage because a woman who has had sexual intercourse with a man is unchaste and unworthy of being given as a ritual gift. The Pandits say that, in olden times, the bride used to be absolutely chaste because girls were married before menarche. This is not done nowadays because of changing social norms and the legal prohibition of child marriage. The ritual gift of a virgin bestows ritual merit upon the person who gives her and the person who accepts her. The girl may be given in marriage by her father, father's father if he is alive, father's elder brother, or her own elder brother. Sometimes a mother's brother may be called upon to give away his niece in marriage if her father and future husband are of the same *gotra* (see above, pp. 103ff.).

Having made the gift, the bride's father puts a new *yagnopavit* of six strands around the bridegroom's neck and removes the *yagnopavit* of three strands which the latter has been wearing since his *mekhal*. This rite symbolizes the assumption of the responsibility for the ritual debts (see above, p. 92) of the bride by her husband.

As these rites are being performed, the bride's younger sister is given a gift of money by the bridegroom's father to console her in her sorrow at the imminent departure of her sister from her natal home. The close bond between sisters is recognized in this usage.

The most important of the marriage rites is called *sapta-padi* ('walking seven steps'). Seven coins are put around the ritual fire. The bridegroom then holds the hands of the bride and leads her step by step over the seven coins. As he guides her over the seven coins, the priests make him repeat the *mantra* which they themselves recite. The bridegroom promises the bride that he will do

seven things for her: feed her, look after her health, give her wealth, be answerable for her well-being, give her offspring, be good to her at all times, and be bound to her in mutual friendship. After this rite the marriage is irrevocable.

Towards the end of the ritual, the bridegroom gives some walnuts to the bride who gives them to her father-in-law who blesses her. This usage is perhaps symbolic of the fact that the children which the husband will have by his wife will belong to his father's patrilineage.[10]

The bride having been gifted away and accepted, and the rituals having been borne witness to by gods, marriage binds husband and wife in an indissoluble bond. It is not only a contract but also a sacrament. Moreover, a ritual gift cannot be taken back, and once accepted it cannot be abandoned. The Pandits call marriage *nethar* (*ne*=never+*ethar*=change), meaning thereby a permanent bond. The Sanskrit term *vivaha* also is employed, and means 'carrying away'; it refers to the change of residence by the bride who is carried away to her conjugal home. This poses a problem which the Pandits have solved in an ingenious manner. The girl having been gifted away should not return to her natal home, for, as already stated, no gift should return to its giver. Therefore, when the girl leaves her natal home, she does not walk out through the door, but is handed out of a window. Thus, her subsequent visits to her natal home become possible; not having used the front door of the house for going out, she can enter through it on these return visits.

Secondary Marriages and Remarriage

Marriage is indissoluble, but a man may take a second wife if his first wife dies or is unable to bear him children. Pandit men do not usually take secondary wives for the sake of children; only one case was reported to me, and that too from the city of Srinagar. Whereas widowers have been traditionally permitted to remarry, widows did not have this right probably, or at least

[10] In its essential details the Pandit marriage ritual conforms to Sanskritic injunctions. For details of the Sanskritic ritual, see Prabhu (1954, pp. 165-75). For the rites accepted in Hindu law as essential to a legally valid marriage, see Mayne (1953, pp. 160-62).

partly, because they cannot be given as ritual gifts and, therefore, their marriage for a second time cannot be truly solemnized. The ritual status of a widow's children by a second marriage also would be doubtful.

Nevertheless, the last 20 years have witnessed many cases of widow remarriage among the Pandits. A 'social reformation movement'—so-called—in support of widow remarriage and other changes in the traditional way of life originated in the city in the early 'thirties and later spread to the villages. Subsequently, an Utrassu-Umanagri widow was married into another village in 1939, but she died soon later. This remarriage failed to receive wide approval in the village. Seven years later a widow's father-in-law sponsored her marriage to his younger son. The priests, defying the Brahmanic code, proved equal to the occasion and performed an abridged version of the marriage ritual. This time many elders of the village came out in support of widow remarriage. Since then six more widows of Utrassu-Umanagri have married in the village and two outside it. One widow has come in from outside. There are now seven remarried women in the village.

It seems that the Pandits of the village did not greatly oppose this breach of religion and custom ; they were, in fact, divided on the desirability of such marriages. The aristocratic and some other families made a feeble verbal protest in the name of religion and custom, but this stand was weakened by the fact that Telakchand, one of the prominent aristocratic men of the village, supported the second widow remarriage which took place in his wife's natal family. The majority of the Pandits connived at these early cases of widow remarriage, probably because they saw in it an answer to the problem of finding wives for all men. The values and principles of the 'social reformation movement' have also had some influence upon the rural Pandits and made them conscious of the hardships and miseries of young widows. The aristocratic families have now given up their opposition, but none of them has yet allowed such a marriage to take place in his own household.

It is of interest to note that in five of the seven cases of widow remarriage in Utrassu-Umanagri, the marriage was decided upon by mutual consent between the widow and her second husband.

In two of these cases the widow married her deceased husband's paternal cousin, and in three cases an unrelated man. In the remaining two cases, the widow's father-in-law asked his younger son to marry her. It is significant that five of the seven men who married these widows were bachelors, and all of them were between 23 and 35 years of age.

II

Structural Consequences of Marriage

Marriage has both immediate and long term consequences. A feature of the Pandit kinship system is that, whereas the immediate rearrangement of roles and change in status consequent upon marriage are of great significance to a newly married woman and her natal and affinal households, these changes do not immediately affect the position of a newly married man in his own *chulah*. For at least some years after marriage (exactly how long would mainly depend upon the presence or absence of members older than himself in his household and their age), a man's relations with his wife are overshadowed by the relations between her on the one side and his parents and other members of his household on the other. Ideally, a man's marriage is expected never to affect his roles as, say, son or brother. Since he continues to live in his own natal household he does not have to make the kind of adjustments his wife has to.

For a woman marriage is the beginning of a second (the Pandits would say, her real) life, as it were. Although an unmarried daughter has an important place in the affections of her parents, and is of great help in domestic work, yet there is no specific jurally or ritually important role for her to fill in her natal home before her marriage. Subsequently, she has certain ceremonial functions in her natal family, but her most important roles are as wife and mother in her conjugal family.

Not only is a girl physically transferred to her new home on her marriage, but she is also given a new personal name;[11] she is, indeed, truly 'twice born'. The effect of this change in her

[11] Cf. 'The establishment of a new equilibrium after a marriage requires that in certain types of kinship or family structure there is a need felt for

emotional life is, of course, immense. The newly wedded woman, suddenly uprooted from her natal home, is placed in the midst of strangers *vis-à-vis* whom she is expected to assume roles some of which are not only novel but also the opposite of the roles hitherto played by her. From having been a member of a household by virtue of birth, she now becomes a member of another household by virtue of marriage, and it is with the latter *chulah* that her future lies.

The change in her mode of residence and the nature of her *chulah* membership is accompanied by changes in a woman's jural and ritual status. Till her marriage takes place, a girl's jural position is indistinguishable from that of her brothers. It is regarded as the duty of her natal household to arrange for her marriage. If she is married patriuxorilocally, as happens rarely, she retains her rights as a coparcener in her natal home. Her husband retains similar rights in his own natal household, and does not acquire them in his conjugal *chulah*. But if a girl is married patrivirilocally, which is by far the commoner practice, she loses her status as a coparcener in her natal household. But she retains certain residual and contingent rights.[12] Thus she expects gifts from her natal household on specified occasions, such as her own and her husband's birthdays, the ritual initiation of her sons, and the marriage of her children. Should she become a widow, a woman may return to her natal home where she has the contingent residual right of maintenance. But it is uncommon for a widow to return to her natal home ; a widow with children never does so. Of the 27 widows living in Utrassu-Umanagri, only two have resumed residence in their natal homes ; both are childless and live with their brothers. Whereas a widow has the moral and the jural rights to return to her natal home, she also has an inalienable right to stay on in her conjugal home. In fact, her ritual ties irrevocably bind her and her children to her conjugal family.

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emphasizing the separateness of the two connected families. . . . In the Nguni tribes the personal name that a woman has in her own family, as a daughter, may not be used by her husband's family, who have to provide her with a new name, which again will not be used by her own relatives. She is a different person in the two groups' (Radcliffe-Brown 1950, p. 58). The Pandit practice is exactly similar to the Nguni custom.

[12] Cf. Srinivas (1952, pp. 125f.) for similar rights of Coorg women.

From the point of view of ritual status, an unmarried girl is regarded as pure and chaste like a goddess but without the ritual status of an initiated person. The Pandits attach great value to virginity (*kaniktav*). A virgin is doubly pure before her menarche as she does not suffer periodical defilement by menstruation. That is one of the reasons why child marriage was a favoured practice in past times. An adult virgin is not pure because she suffers periodical defilement, and a married woman, though ritually initiated, has, of course, lost her virginity. From the day of her marriage a woman wears, as a sign of her ritual status, a cotton cord round her waist, against the skin, resembling a man's ritual girdle. This cord is also used to wear necessary sanitary protection during the period of menstruation. Thus, the very cord which symbolizes ritual adulthood may be seen as also symbolizing the fall from virginal purity.

The immediate consequence of the attainment of ritual adulthood by a girl is that she acquires the privilege of participation in all the domestic rituals which her husband may perform. In fact, these rituals and ceremonies are ideally performed by a man together with his wife. In the performance of rituals a Pandit's wife is his *ardhangini* ('half of the body') and *dharmapatni* (partner for the performance of *dharma*).

As a ritual adult a woman suffers pollution by births and deaths among her affines. A married woman's parturition and death also cause pollution to her affines, but not to her agnates. An unmarried girl's death does not cause pollution to anybody. A married woman receives a ritual funeral, and thereafter offerings of food and water from her sons, husband, or his agnates. Thus only a married woman joins the manes of a family. From the foregoing facts it may be concluded that ritual adulthood irrevocably binds a woman to her conjugal family. This is perhaps what those Pandits mean who say that a woman enters her husband's *gotra* on her marriage, and that she has no *gotra* before that.

Although a woman ceases to be a coresidential member of her natal *chulah* on her marriage, yet she does not cease to be a daughter or a sister. Besides certain residual jural rights and ritual obligations, personal affection and sentiment sustain her ties with her natal home. Thus, a married daughter and her son

are required to participate in the funeral rites of her parents; and a man can, if he so likes, offer food and water in the name of his mother's deceased father. A daughter loses no opportunity of visiting her natal home, in the early years of her married life, to be present at various ritual and ceremonial occasions, such as birthdays and death anniversaries. If taken ill, she may be removed to her natal *chulah* where she feels more relaxed, and hopes to be better looked after. But as her parents and parents-in-law die, and her own children grow up, she is gradually absorbed into her conjugal *chulah* and her bonds with her natal home gradually become weakened.

Although there is a decline in informal interaction, yet a female agnate, in her position as *pof* (father's sister), has to play important ceremonial roles on various occasions, such as initiation and marriage, in the lives of her brother's children. The Pandits refer to the *pof's* role as *pofakar* (*pof's* work). Thus, she ceremonially cooks food; paints ritual symbols and makes floral patterns (in lime, turmeric and other colours) on the façade of her brother's house to the accompaniment of singing by other women; applies the ceremonial *mainz* (*Lawsonia inermis*) to the hands and feet of the initiate, bridegroom, or bride; and at the time of her nephew's *mekhal* distributes tea and cakes among all the kith and kin present in her brother's house. She receives gifts in cash and kind from her natal household on these occasions. Her husband, who shares her privileged position, may be requested to tie the turban on the initiate's or the bridegroom's head. This is regarded as a great honour, and a man is so honoured in his capacity as the *pof's* husband. *Pofakar* is a privilege and a right which may not be denied to a woman. It is an expression of her position as an agnate in her natal family. But as another generation grows up the *pof* becomes the *pofanani* (father's father's sister) and is, if alive, regarded as a remote kinswoman. A Pandit proverb sums up the declining ties of a woman with her natal *chulah* thus: The daughter of today is the sister of tomorrow, the *pof* and the *pofanani* of a later day, and then she is a stranger.

The Woman-Giving Household

Marriage among the Pandits results in changes in the internal

structure of the households which are joined in an affinal alliance. Whenever a marriage takes place, a natal member of one household is transferred to the other. The departure of a girl from her home depletes her natal family but augments her conjugal family. In reciprocal marriages the loss of a daughter is compensated by the addition of a daughter-in-law to the household. But the depletion of the household through the marriage of its female natal members is only to be expected.

It is also an important event in the developmental cycle of the *chulah*. A daughter, unable to continue her patrilineage, is socially useless *qua* daughter. But as daughter-in-law, she bears the sons who continue her husband's patrilineage. Moreover, one of the processes underlying the developmental cycle of the *chulah* is that of conflict between the sibling and conjugal bonds. The change of residence by women on their marriage leads to the development of this conflict between brothers, and its resolution so far as relations between brothers and sisters are concerned. When a girl is married out, her departure simplifies the position with regard to interkin relations in her natal household. The husband's unmarried sister is one of the main obstacles in the way of the growing influence and assimilation of a woman in her conjugal household. Not only is a woman's role as husband's sister made less effective by her assumption of other roles and change of residence but her influence on her mother is also reduced. When the mother-daughter axis breaks down, the mother in her role as mother-in-law is a more accommodating person.

The marriage of an only or a last daughter may reduce a household drastically to a conjugal pair, a widow or a widower. A couple approaching old age need to be physically cared for; they also need the economic and emotional support of a son. Besides these immediate needs, there are also remoter needs like the need for proper funeral and *shraddha* and the desire for earthly 'immortality' through agnatic lineal descendants. The emotional fulfilment and satisfaction which the presence of sons and grandchildren alone can give is sorely missed if a couple find themselves childless in old age. The feeling of helplessness and loneliness is greater in the case of a widow or a widower than in the case of a married couple. But such situations do not

arise often. When it is likely to arise, two courses are open to the household concerned: a son may be adopted or a daughter married patriuxorilocally. It is only very rarely that nothing is done to remedy such a situation. There are two men belonging to other villages, and one belonging to Utrassu-Umanagri, who are patriuxorilocally resident in the village. In only one of these three households does the daughter concerned have no brothers; in the other two they are present but are young, while the parents are old and poor. Similarly there are eight men of the village who are living patriuxorilocally in other villages. In five of these cases the conjugal *chulahs* of these men lack sons.

Unions involving patriuxorilocal residence are called *gari pyath* ('at home') marriages. Such a marriage is a contract between a man and his parent(s)-in-law. He takes up residence with his wife's natal household, looks after its estate, shares in enjoying its prosperity, and, if needed, provides additional income. All the three *gari pyath* sons-in-law, resident in Utrassu-Umanagri, are actively engaged in earning cash incomes which they contribute, at least partly, to the expenses of their conjugal households. Such a son-in-law looks after the upkeep of his wife's natal household and the comforts of his parent(s)-in-law. If his wife has younger siblings, he arranges for the schooling and the *mekhal* of the boys, and the marriage of them all. After the death of his parent(s)-in-law he is free to return to his natal home. In exchange for his services a son-in-law obtains a wife, and eventually his children inherit the whole of their mother's father's estate which may be of considerable value. He himself does not acquire any direct right of inheritance though this seems to be the position under Hindu law (see Derrett 1962, pp. 23f.). Even his children's jural and ritual positions in their own paternal family remain unaltered by the mode of their residence and the fact that they inherit through their mother from her natal household.

The Pandit Woman in her Conjugal Household

For a few months after her marriage a woman is referred to as the bride (*mahrini*) by her relatives-in-law. She is treated as a favoured guest, served special foods, and made to wear her



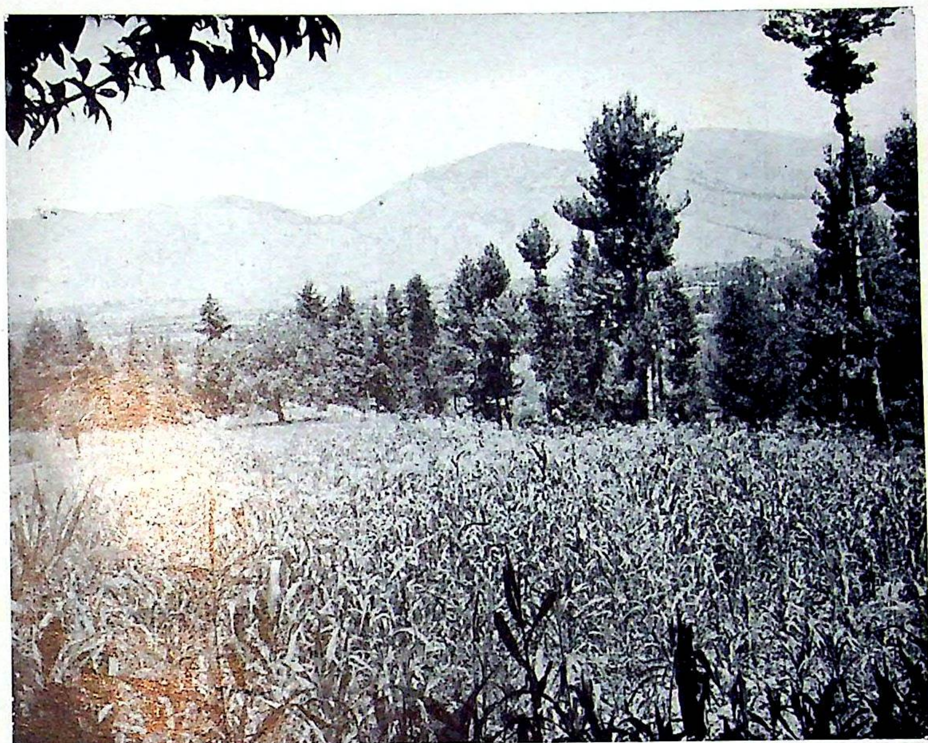
I. Utrassu-Umanagri in winter: Snow on the roofs of Pandit houses.



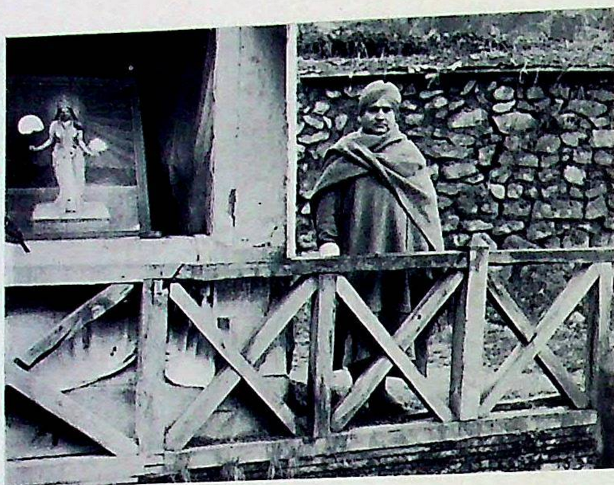
II. Muslim cultivators weeding and transplanting in a paddy field.



III. Paddy fields (after sowing) around Utrassu.



IV. A maize field (ready for harvesting) in Umanagri.

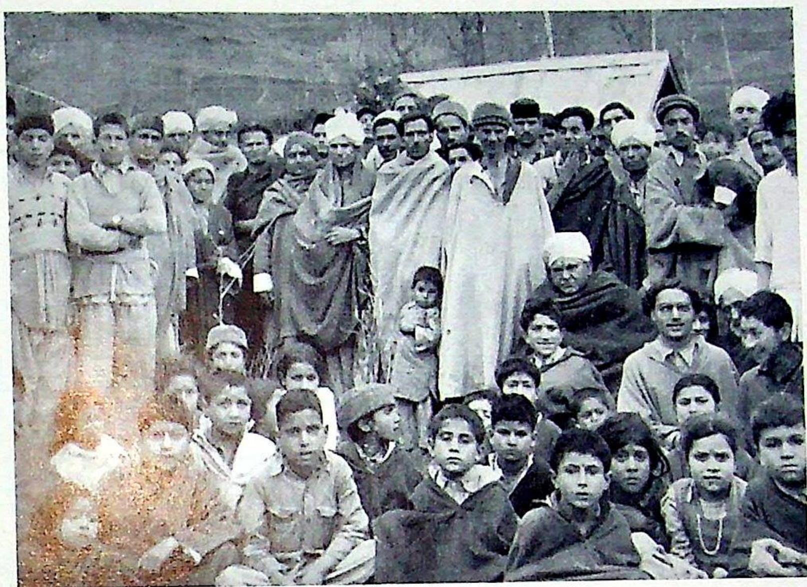


V. *Mahant* Krishnanand alongside a portrait of the goddess Uma at the holy springs in Umanagri.



VI. The 'Convoy' (see Appendix III).

Left to Right : Bishambar Nath Koul, Shambhu Nath Tikoo, Srikanth Pandit, (Amar Nath [illegible]), Vasudev Pandit, and Sarwanand Pandit.



VII. A group of the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri at the holy springs on the occasion of the death anniversary of the founder-*mahant*.



VIII. Two Pandit houses in which five households (belonging to one *kotamb*) reside. In the foreground (right corner) is a jointly owned granary.



IX. A Pandit household. In front of the boy seated first from left is a *kangri* (brazier). It is a clay bowl in a wicker container, filled with live charcoal, and is carried inside the gown during the winter. The group is sitting on a *gubba* (embroidered rug) outside their house. In the right corner (foreground) is a pair of wooden sandals.



X. A young Pandit couple with their child. All their clothes, except the man's cap (bought in Srinagar), are of the old style. Pandit women wear golden rings and ear pendants as signs of wifehood.



XI. A Pandit and his bride at the conclusion of the wedding rites. Smoke can be seen rising from the embers of the fire which had been lit to serve as a purificatory agent, divine witness of the rites, and conveyor of food offerings to gods. The concluding rite of offering flowers to the couple accounts for the heap of petals in front of the bride.



XII. A young Pandit mother and her son. She is wearing a *sari*.



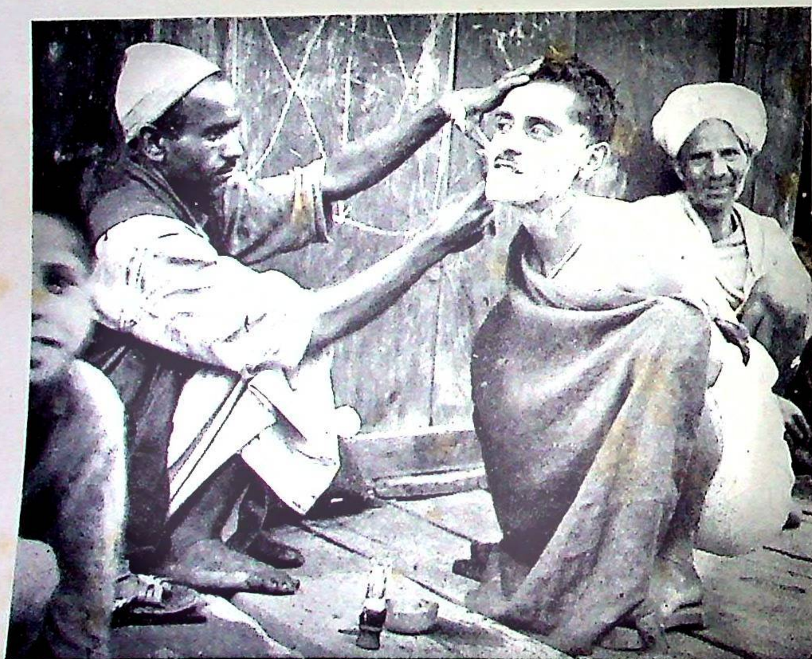
XIII. A Pandit woman's body being made ready for removal to the cremation ground. It has been given a ritual bath, wrapped in white cloth, and placed on a wooden plank. Weeping nearby is her daughter-in-law.



XIV. The *kotamb :* Two married women (on the left) and an unmarried girl, related as cousins, washing utensils in the common courtyard.



XV. A Pandit landlord and his Muslim tenant.



XVI. A Pandit being shaved by a Muslim barber, while another awaits his turn.

bridal clothes and jewellery. She is not allowed to do any heavy work such as cooking or fetching water. She is allowed to visit her natal home (*malyun*) frequently ; in fact, she does not spend more than nine months or so of the year after her marriage in her conjugal home (*variw*), but she must be present on all occasions of domestic importance such as ritual feasts and fasts, birthdays and death anniversaries. The parents of a newly married woman anxiously await her visits so that they may know how she is faring. They offer her advice and console her if she complains of harsh treatment. On their part, the relatives-in-law watch her doings with a critical eye for any lapse of etiquette or lack of skill, and frown upon her mistakes. If these are repeated, her parents are sent a message reprimanding them for not having properly trained her. There may also be complaints about insufficient prestations (*hyot-dyot*, 'taken-and-given'). The contrast between the joys of a woman's life in her *malyun* and the hardships she has to bear in her *variw* are a favourite theme in Kashmiri folklore (see Bazaz 1959). On the whole, the first year or so after marriage usually is an exciting time for a woman as well as her relatives-in-law. For her the acquisition of adult status, connubial joys, new clothes and ornaments, and the frequent visiting to and back from her *variw* contribute to the excitement. For her conjugal family there are the joys of having a new daughter-in-law (*nosh*) in the house and of receiving gifts.

In terms of overt behaviour, a woman's closest relations in her conjugal household are with her husband's mother, sisters, and his brothers' wives. The attitude of a mother-in-law towards her daughter-in-law is influenced by two important factors: (1) the extent to which a man allows his relations with his wife to affect his relations with his parents and siblings ; and (2) the extent to which the parents-in-law of a woman are satisfied with the gifts they receive from her parents. Further, the Pandit women are traditionally domineering and harsh in their attitude towards their daughters-in-law ; but whether a particular mother-in-law is kinder or harsher than usual depends upon her own temperamental make-up and the temperament and behaviour of her daughter-in-law. Among the Pandits a daughter-in-law is traditionally expected to be self-effacing, hard-working,

respectful and obedient, and to conform to a severe code of etiquette. She is the first member of the household to wake up in the morning and does not retire to bed unless she is asked to do so. She may not eat before her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law (husband's sisters) have had their food. Since no woman eats before the male members of the household, she may not on occasion get enough to eat, or get all the things that have been cooked. She should not speak to any adult male directly or look him in the face. She should sit with her back turned towards the elders as facing them is regarded as being over-bold. She does not have a joking relationship with any of her affines, but may be on familiar terms with such of them as are younger than herself. Above all, she should completely avoid her husband in the presence of others.

Strained relations between a woman and her relatives-in-law are of common occurrence. The uneven development of relations between a woman and, on the one hand, her husband, and on the other, her relatives-in-law, usually is the main reason for this ; even before they have ceased to regard her as a stranger, the husband comes to love her and confide in her. If he allows his feelings for his wife to result in a pronounced change in his attitude towards the members of his natal household, their attitude towards him becomes suspicious and bitter. They resent the influence his wife is able to exercise over him and complain that their *nosh* has estranged one of their kin from them. The more her influence on her husband or his solicitude for her, the greater the resentment a woman's relatives-in-law bear towards her ; and the more they are resentful towards her the closer her husband feels drawn to her.

Other factors also may contribute to the already strained relations between sons and their parents. Adult sons often complain of their parents' failure to recognize that the former are grown-up *individuals,* and not mere appendages of the latter. Whereas sons rebel against the emotional possessiveness of their parents, the latter wonder—to quote one irate father—'how a son can forget his mother's milk that still sticks to his mouth'.

An adult son may also disagree with the manner in which his parents manage the affairs of the household, but he should not question the wisdom of their actions. If he does, many

people will regard him as being insolent and disobedient. Filial piety entails unquestioning obedience to the wishes of one's parents, even when they are obviously wrong. But personal interest does often take the upper hand in a man's actions, particularly if the disregard for his parents' wishes is not likely to be taken very seriously by them. Thus, Badri (27) insisted on taking his wife away with him to a town, where he is employed, on the ground that he could live more frugally if his wife were to keep house for him. His parents resisted the suggestion at first, but finally relented. On his part, Badri also took his younger brother, aged nine, with him.

In her relations with her daughter-in-law a woman is much influenced by her nubile daughters. The Pandits say that the husband's sister is a mother-in-law in miniature. She is usually exacting in her demands upon her brother's wife and critical in her attitude towards her. Although she may be a couple of years younger than her brother's wife, yet she will treat the latter as an equal, or even as one junior to her in age. The main reason for her attitude also may be seen in the estrangement which grows between siblings when they attain adulthood.

Dwarkanath (25) was a dutiful son and a devoted brother till his marriage. A few months afterwards, his wife, aged eighteen, and his younger sister, aged sixteen, quarrelled because, according to his mother, his wife insulted his sister. Soon it was noticed that Dwarkanath was not talking as much to his sister as formerly, and this was much resented by his mother and sister because they had expected him to reprimand his wife. Nothing seemed to go straight between him and his mother and sister after this happening. His own version, given to me about a year later, was that his sister and his wife had had a tiff and he had tried to remain completely neutral by busying himself in various household duties. When I told this to his elder brother, the latter exclaimed, 'Neutral? He has no right to equal one of his own blood with a stranger.'

After her marriage a Pandit girl comes nearer to her parents and siblings, particularly the former. Constrained by custom to part with their child, and send her away to live with strangers, parents feel most grieved when their daughter departs for her new home. I saw the parents and other close kin of two brides

weeping at this sad moment. Most daughters complain of the drudgery, if not the harshness, of a daughter-in-law's life, and are showered with gifts and love by their solicitous parents. Consequently, parents and daughters develop a new, richer emotional relationship.

The changed status of a daughter *qua* daughter also contributes to this development. Away from her natal home, a married woman rarely questions the actions of her parents in their own household. She may even act as a peacemaker between her parents and siblings. She no longer has any common interests with them, and her absence removes the possibility of even minor irritations developing between them. Her loyalty towards her own husband does not conflict with her loyalty towards her kin. Being no longer a coparcener she is not a potential rival to her brothers' interest in their ancestral estate. But the position of a son is quite the reverse. His marriage may create a hiatus between him and his parents and siblings.

Tensions may also arise between a woman and her parents-in-law, and even her husband may become displeased, owing to the general desire of the Pandits to receive more prestations from their daughter-in-law's natal household than they do. A woman may be ill-treated and taunted for the alleged miserliness and meanness of her parents. The most striking example of such an attitude that came to my notice was the following. Dinanath (36) had been married 14 years when his younger brother Mohanlal (20) got married. Mohanlal's parents-in-law sent him more personal gifts than Dinanath had received from his wife's parents. Although a father of five children, he showed such annoyance at his wife's parents' miserliness that she persuaded them to present him with a suit of clothes although there was no occasion calling for such a gift! I also recorded a few instances of the refusal of parents-in-law to recall their daughter-in-law, after she had gone on a visit to her parental home, unless her parents sent more gifts than they had done in the past.

The attitude of a woman towards her husband's brothers' wives, and theirs towards her, is one of indifference or friendliness to begin with, but becomes competitive with the passage of time. So long as their mother-in-law is alive they are all under her control. After her death they usually come into con-

flict with each other. This phase in the relations between sisters-in-law is of considerable significance in the context of fission in the household, and will be discussed at length in Chapter 8.

It may be stressed here that the general pattern of regularities in the relations between a woman and her relatives-in-law is not static but changes over time. Her becoming a mother is the most important event in this developmental process, and contributes significantly towards her assimilation in her conjugal household. The Pandits say that a daughter-in-law proves her worth when she bears a child. After a woman has borne several children her contacts with her natal home gradually become weakened; she goes there less often, particularly after the death of her parents, and her interests in her conjugal household become ramified. Another crucial development in this process of assimilation is her father-in-law's death, particularly if her husband is the eldest of several brothers or the only son of his parents, for he then succeeds his father as the head of the household. Daughters-in-law may come into serious conflict with their mother-in-law in this phase of *chulah* development, and seek to challenge her authority over them. Radhamal (50) found, after her husband's death, that the elder of her two daughters-in-law, aged 30 and mother of three children, had become strangely defiant. Previously Radhamal had run her household strictly according to her own wishes and had been an exacting mother-in-law to her elder daughter-in-law for 12 years and to her younger daughter-in-law for three years. The elder daughter-in-law, who had always hated her mother-in-law, persuaded her husband, when he became the head of the household, to let her have an increasing voice in household matters. Radhamal's initial reaction was to fight with her daughter-in-law and complain against her to the latter's husband. He listened to his mother's complaints patiently but did nothing to restrain his wife because (as he told his elder sister) his wife had been suppressed too long and was not a child. Subsequently, his sister advised her mother to try to make peace with her daughter-in-law. The important change which had occurred in Radhamal's status was that she was no longer the wife, but merely the mother, of the head of the household.

There are also many instances of a son who takes the side

of his parents or widowed mother against his wife. One of the common reasons why a woman visits a magician or priest on behalf of her daughter, or on her own behalf, is to seek a talisman to turn the husband's loyalty towards his wife. In fact, even the man who takes the side of his wife rarely does so defiantly or openly, because the Pandits regard filial piety as a much higher virtue than conjugal love.

The Husband-Wife Relationship

As long as a man's parents are alive, or there are other elders, particularly males, in the household, his relations with his wife are severely limited. He has no exclusive jural responsibility on her behalf. It is the duty of the household to look after her, and should she die without leaving behind a ritually initiated son, her husband's younger brother, rather than he himself, is called upon to perform the obsequies. Similarly a woman is not expected to do anything for her husband alone, unless, of course, she is the wife of the head of the household. Thus, she may not cook any special food for him ; if she wants to wash a single shirt of his, she must collect the dirty clothes of other members of the household as a pretext for the wash. Bishambarnath put the matter thus: 'If a man returns home after a visit of long duration to Srinagar or some other place, his return will cause excitement and joy in his home. When he enters the yard, men, women and children of his *chulah* will flock around him. Men and women will embrace him and kiss his forehead ; women will weep with joy ; and children will run about and shout. Even neighbours, Pandits and Muslims, will join in welcoming him. But there is one woman who will remain unaffected, and continue to do whatever she was doing when the commotion began. Or, she may run into the kitchen apparently to work there. But she will take no notice of the man who has come back. Nor will he bestow a glance on her. She is his wife!'

There are two reasons for this attitude. The growth of an exclusive loyalty between any two members of a household is disruptive of the ideal of joint living. Since a daughter-in-law is a relative stranger, the development of such a loyalty between her and her husband is looked upon with particular disfavour. Therefore, the only exclusive interest which a young couple may

take in one another is as sexual mates, and this also they are expected to do only at night and in the privacy of their bedroom. The Pandits' attitude towards sexual desire, and their general sexual morality, also preclude spouses from openly showing any interest in each other. Moreover, the human genitals are regarded with a certain degree of disgust in view of their excretory functions, and the attitude towards them is extended to sexual intercourse. Consequently, there is a sense of shame which surrounds the wife-husband relationship for many years after marriage when sexual desire is held to be the main interest which a man and his wife have in one another.

The sexual relationship between husband and wife, though shameful, is also justified because it leads to the highly desired status of parenthood. Further, sexual gratification is regarded as an essential feature of a successful marriage. The Pandits strongly believe that a woman who gets proper sexual gratification in her union with her husband will never be unfaithful to him. Sexual lapses on the part of men are not held as a sign of an unsuccessful marriage. Even some of my old women informants held this view, and two of them almost boasted of their husbands' sexual exploits.

When children are born of a union, the husband-wife relationship acquires its *raison d'être,* not so much for the couple themselves, as in the eyes of the husband's natal household. But even afterwards, the husband-wife relationship between the junior members of the household continues to be subordinated to the parent-child and sibling relationships. Nevertheless, there is an obvious difference between the apparent mutual non-recognition of a newly-wedded couple, and the avoidance between a man and his wife who have been long married and have children, but are younger than some other members of the household.

When a man's parents die, and he becomes the head of the household, he assumes the economic and ritual responsibilities for his wife and children. By the time a household is in this phase of development, the conflicting pulls of a man's ties with his parents and siblings on the one hand, and his wife and children on the other will have been resolved through the death of his parents, the marriage of his sisters, and separation

(through partition) between him and his brothers. Consequently, he is able to devote himself to the interests of his wife and children without restraint.

A man has, in this phase of life, many interests in common with his wife. She is his *garavajeni* (housekeeper) and counseller, and has the sole responsibility for rearing young children, if they have any. She cooks and distributes food, works in the kitchen garden, looks after cattle, and does all other work incidental to domestic life.

On his part, the husband regards himself as his wife's provider and protector ; she is his ward as his children are. He is expected to wield authority over her: the Pandits do not subscribe to the notion of marriage as a companionship between equals. An over-lenient and over-fond husband is likely to be dominated openly by his wife, and if that happens he is much ridiculed. Close observation of husband-wife relations among the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri reveals that the formal domination of husbands over wives, though true, conceals the fact that women are able to exert a far greater influence over their husbands than even they themselves care to admit. The power of a wife over her husband must not become blatantly open and aggressive if it is to succeed, as no man wants to be publicly known as a hen-pecked husband. Instead the man who is able to dominate his wife and, if need be, beat her, thinks much of himself and is similarly regarded by others. Nevertheless, the phrase *shandagand-tota* (the parrot of the pillow), which Pandits employ to designate wives, is an expressive one ; the wife is supposed to influence her husband's attitudes when they have both retired to bed.

In the Pandit society marriage is not a single act, nor a static relationship. It grows with the growing couple and means different things at different stages. Beginning with an exclusively sexual connotation, other interests, rights and obligations are added to it over the years, so that the Pandits maintain that an old man's wife is like a mother to him. There is considerable truth in this saying. A man with adult children is a rather lonely figure in the *chulah*. His authoritarian position as the head of the household tends to separate him from his adult children who are, therefore, much closer to their mother. The

dictates of etiquette and sexual morality preclude intimacy between a father and his adult daughters ; moreover the latter live in their own respective conjugal households and visit their parents only occasionally. A man's sons are his potential rivals ; he has economic interests in common with them, and though they are his coparceners in the event of partition, yet they are subordinate to him while the joint household lasts. In the circumstances, a Pandit son is normally very deferential towards his father, but has freer relations with his mother. Consequently, a woman is able to shift easily in her old age her interests from her husband to her sons and daughters, but the older a man grows the greater his dependence upon his wife, since his children are no longer young so that he may play with them and be on familiar terms with them. An old man, therefore, feels the loss of his wife much more than an old woman feels the loss of her husband.

A Man and His Affines

The relations of a man with his affines are very different from those of a woman with her husband's family. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, it is unusual for a man to leave his natal home and take up residence with his wife ; and secondly, a man does not acquire any ritual and jural rights or obligations towards his wife's kin. Thus, he neither offers nor receives oblations from them, nor does he inherit property from them.

The relations between a man and his affines are characterized by great reserve in the early years of the relationship. He never visits his *howur* (wife's natal household) unless he is invited to do so. When he is on such a visit, he is treated as an honoured guest, and receives gifts when he departs from there.

For a man his wife's kin are 'strangers'—non-kin—and he is a stranger to them. Moreover, they ever remain so ; they have no interests in common with each other. But with the passage of years intimacies develop and mutual relations become less restrained though never familiar. In the Pandits' estimation there is hardly anything more unseemly than a quarrel between a man and his *howur*. His affines are his well-wishers and sympathizers. Thus, when either of a man's parents dies, his

mother-in-law or, in her absence, his wife's sister or her brother's wife, visits him to stitch his gown (*pheran*) which he formally tears to express grief. On the eleventh day after the death of his father or mother, he is presented with new clothes by his wife's natal household.

Fresh bonds and interests emerge with the growth of a new generation. A man's relatives-in-law become the matrikin (*matamal*) of his children, and he becomes the *pofuv* (father's sister's husband) of his wife's brother's children, and the *masuv* (mother's sister's husband) of her sister's children. The *pofuv* may be called upon to perform the ceremonial function of tying his nephew's turban on the occasion of the latter's initiation or marriage.

Relations between Affinally Related Households

It now remains for us to consider the interrelations between affinally related households. Just as the wife-husband relationship changes and develops over time so does the relationship between two affinally related *chulahs*. It has already been pointed out that after two households enter into an affinal alliance, the first phase of their relationship is ideally characterized by an unequal and irreversible relationship. Although the two households call each other *sonya* reciprocally, they do not treat each other equally. The members of the girl-giving *chulah* are expected to be humble and respectful in their dealings with the other *chulah*. Whereas the members of the latter deal directly with their daughter-in-law, and the members of her natal household, the latter do not establish any direct contact with their son-in-law, or their daughter while she is in her conjugal home. All their dealings are with their daughter's mother- or parents-in-law. They have to accept as inevitable the harsh treatment of their daughter in her conjugal home, as also complaints from that *chulah* that enough gifts are not being sent.

The sending of prestations by a girl's natal household to her conjugal *chulah* is an important aspect of the *sonya* relationship. These gifts (consisting of clothes, jewellery, cash money, dry fruits and other victuals) are both for the daughter of the gift-giving *chulah* as also her relatives-in-law. The gifts sent in her name are clothes and jewellery and are usually given to her

by her mother-in-law, though she may keep some of these for her own daughters. Gifts of clothes, money, food etc. are for the relatives-in-law and the mother-in-law receives these and distributes them according to certain well-established conventions.

A girl-giving household generally communicates to its future *sonya,* before the marriage, the *teth* or scale on which all future gifts will be based. This is done to prevent later misunderstandings ; if the *teth* is known, the right amount of prestations can be determined according to the importance of each occasion. The gifts sent may exceed the requirements of the *teth,* but should not fall below it ; if they do, the gift-receiving household may demand that the deficiency be made good, resulting in strained relations between the two *chulahs.*

The unit in the *teth* is given a value usually ranging from one to five rupees. The negotiations which precede marriage often involve bargaining over the fixation of this value. But, so far as I could find out, the negotiations never fail over this issue. It seems that misunderstandings over prestations develop even in those cases where they are based upon a scale, so that many Pandits do not regard negotiations over them as being of much use.

These prestations may be seen as serving three purposes. Firstly, they are a means of indirectly compensating the daughter for her loss of rights of inheritance. These gifts are, therefore, at least partly motivated by love and kinship sentiments. Secondly, the parents of every girl hope that if they send enough gifts to her parents-in-law, the latter will treat their daughter-in-law well. The large quantity and the superior quality of gifts received from a daughter-in-law's natal *chulah* helps to give her prestige in her conjugal household, and make her the better loved of daughters-in-law. However, no amount of gifts can achieve what a daughter-in-law's temperament and conduct can. Thirdly, prestations enhance the social status of the household that sends them and gives it fame and prestige in its own village and in the village of its *sonya.*

The second phase of the relationship between affinally related *chulahs* commences with the birth of children to the couple through whom the two households are united. This is an

important development, representing the beginning of the process whereby the assimilation of affinal ties with those of kinship takes place. After the birth of a woman's children her natal family assumes the position of *matamal vis-à-vis* these children. Henceforward it is also as the *matamal* of their grandchildren that the parents of a woman deal with her parents-in-law, and thus acquire a new status in the latter's eyes. Although after she becomes a mother, a woman visits her natal *chulah* less often than she did formerly, her parents now come to visit her oftener, and her children go to visit their *matamal* frequently. But a woman's parents will not eat anything in her conjugal home until the initiation ceremony of her eldest son has taken place. If invited to eat they either refuse, or place money in the cup or plate from which they eat. The idea is not to accept anything back from a daughter who has been given away as a gift, nor from the *chulah* who accepted her as a gift. The Pandits say that when a daughter's son reaches the age of initiation, it may be presumed that he will soon begin to make a contribution to household income; it is, therefore, his food that his maternal grandparents may be said to accept.

When a couple, through whom two households are united in affinity are dead, and their elders also, the relationship of affinity dies with them. The children of a woman and the children of her siblings are consanguineous kin with common grandparents. Thus affinal ties in one generation become cognatic ties in the next. (A fuller analysis of a person's relations with his *matamal* will be given in Chapter 10.)

III

Incorporation

In table VI four persons are shown as being members of Utrassu-Umanagri households by virtue of what I have called 'incorporation'. In one of these households the incorporated member is the step-daughter of a man. She took up residence in his house when her widowed mother married him. Therefore, this case of incorporation is a direct consequence of remarriage

by a widow. The frequency of such instances of incorporation may be expected to increase in future as widow remarriage becomes more common.

There are three other former widows, with a child or children by their deceased husbands, who have married into Utrassu-Umanagri households. One of these widows left her adult son, his wife and children in her first conjugal household to join her second husband. In the other two cases, the widow married a member of her deceased husband's natal household, and her child (a son in one case and a daughter in the other) did not change residence. Thus, a step-child may live in his step-father's household and yet be a natal member of it. Nevertheless, a person's being a natal member of his step-father's household does not equate the former's jural and ritual statuses, in relation to the latter, with those of a natural child. Jankinath's step-son is by birth his step-father's deceased elder brother's son, and, in the event of partition, will be entitled to get one-half of the estate as his father's sole heir. As Jankinath has no other brothers, he and his sons will receive the other half as their share. When Jankinath dies he will be cremated by the eldest of his natural sons, and not his step-son who is the eldest of his children. In other words, the roles of step-father and step-child have as yet no jural or ritual recognition.

The remaining three cases of incorporation are different in nature. When Goondram's parents-in-law died, they were survived by two daughters: his wife and her unmarried younger sister. The latter was brought up by Goondram and his wife in their house, and treated as though she were their own daughter. She was later married into another village, but died after she had given birth to a son and a daughter. Goondram brought the two infants to his home and here they have grown up. The boy is now 13 years old and attends the village school. Both the children go to visit their father occasionally and he returns the visits quite often. A few years ago he took the boy to his natal home for his initiation ceremony. It may also be expected that it will be the children's own natal household who will arrange for their marriage, and that ultimately the boy will go to live with his own father.

The last case of incorporation is of Radhakrishan (17), both

of whose parents are dead, and who lives in the home of his father's mother's brother's adoptive son. The latter is by birth Radhakrishan's deceased father's brother. It is obvious from the foregoing instances of incorporation that the usual and traditionally recognized modes of recruitment to the Pandit household are birth, adoption and marriage.

7

The Economic Aspect of the Household

In the preceding three chapters we have considered the compositive aspect of the Pandit household; the nature of its membership was considered in Chapter 4, and the modes of recruitment to household membership in Chapters 5 and 6. It was shown that the interrelations between the members of a household are governed by jural and ritual norms, but that *in practice* general or 'normal' behaviour does not always conform to the normative pattern. Among various factors responsible for this discrepancy, the personal interest of individuals, or groups of individuals, within the household is pre-eminently important. In the event of a clash between jural norms and a man's rights over goods and services, or his sexual prerogatives in his wife, the expectation in the Pandit society is that, in the long run, the latter will govern his behaviour. Not only is this clear to the outside observer, but the Pandits themselves are also acutely aware of it; they admit that such a discrepancy between norm and action does occur, but stress that it is unusual and attribute it to extraordinary circumstances or human frailty, or both. They are deeply concerned about the desirability of general adherence to the dictates of kinship morality, and hence seek to underestimate the frequency with which it is violated. In fact, on the basis of observed behaviour, one may well say of the Pandits that, 'the constraints of economics are prior to the constraints of morality and law' (Leach 1961b, p. 9). Factual evidence in support of this assertion will be presented in the following chapter when we will discuss fission in the household. In the present chapter we will confine our attention to a consideration of the economic situation of the Pandit household with reference to (*i*) *chulah* income, and (*ii*) the ownership and the transmission of property within the *chulah*.

I

Traditional Sources of Household Income

The Pandits of rural Kashmir have traditionally depended upon land, salaried employment, and trade for their livelihood. The freehold ownership of agricultural land as a form of property has been possible only since 1932. 'It is clear enough that under successive dynasties of Pathans, Moghuls, Sikhs and the first Dogra Rulers the cultivator in Kashmir was little more than a mere agricultural machine, possessing neither proprietary rights nor in theory any description whatever of even occupancy rights: it appears, however, that some form of hereditary right, though never admitted by the State authorities, was maintained and recognized by the people themselves, and in certain cases sales of land, though illegal and therefore unenforceable, actually took place' (*Report* [of the Glancy Commission] 1932, p. 27).

'Besides the ordinary *assami*, or occupant of village land, there were many privileged holders of land variously known as *chakdar or mukraridar*—men who had acquired landed property under deeds granted by the State' (Lawrence 1895, p. 426). It seems that the Pandits held land both as ordinary occupants and hereditary owners when Lawrence commenced a survey for revenue settlement in 1890, for he makes particular mention of 'the official classes and the Pandits who held land on privileged terms' as the interests opposed to his reforms (1895, p. 6).

Under the reforms introduced at the recommendation of Lawrence at the end of the last century, permanent hereditary occupancy rights, but not proprietary rights, were bestowed upon every person who agreed to pay the assessment on the fields he was already cultivating at the time of the settlement (see Lawrence 1895, p. 429f.).

At the turn of the century two Pandit families of Utrassu-Umanagri owned agricultural land in the village received as revenue-free grants from the State (see above, p. 39). All other families possessed occupancy rights. The landowners employed other villagers, Pandits as well as Muslims, as tenants. In fact, it seems that even occupancy right holders sometimes employed subtenants.

As already stated, proprietary rights in agricultural land were granted in 1932 (see *Report* 1932, p. 27f. and *Orders* 1932, p. 4). More than ever before, land ownership now became a symbol of prestige, as also highly advantageous as investment. Consequently, all the Pandit households of Utrassu-Umanagri acquired proprietary rights in the land in their possession. Subsequently as land prices began to rise, several households, Pandit as well as Muslim, sold their land when in need of cash money. Their land was purchased by their co-villagers. Some Pandit households bought land in other villages also.

Salaried employment has been another major traditional source of household income among the Pandits. Lawrence observed: 'In recent times there were few Pandits who were not in receipt of pay from the State and the number of offices was legion' (1895, p. 401). It is of interest to note that 'state service' is recorded as the traditional occupation of Pandits in various census reports (see, e.g., Ram and Raina 1933). But so far as the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri are concerned, not many of them have been in past times employed by the State. This was partly due to their preoccupation with agriculture and partly because of a high incidence of illiteracy. It is quite certain that more Pandits are at present Government employees than ever before, the number of such persons being 73 (about 14 per cent of the total population of 522).

Many rural Pandits have, however, traditionally worked for wages, in cash and kind, as domestic servants and cooks in the houses of the Pandits of Srinagar. Such service has been one of the factors which has led to the growth of a class distinction among the rural Pandits. Nobody who has worked, or works, as a menial is able to claim aristocratic status, or equality with the rural landlords.

The third major traditional source of household income has been trade. Surplus cash, obtained either from the sale of surplus agricultural produce or saved from cash earnings, was often invested in retail trade in groceries, or in wholesale trade in wool, handloom blankets and clarified butter. Buying wool and butter from the Gujar and the Bakarwal (Muslim herdsmen), the Pandits have traditionally sought the services of their Muslim co-villagers to make blankets for sale in the towns. Similarly,

10

butter bought of the herdsmen was clarified at home and then sold to urban dealers. There have been several such grocers and whole-sale traders in Utrassu-Umanagri for at least the last 50 years.

Between the turn of the century and 1948 the only major changes which occurred in the economic situation of the Pandit household in the countryside were: (*i*) the grant of proprietary rights in land, and (*ii*) the gradual increase in the number of salaried persons, mainly as a consequence of an increase in the number of literate Pandits.

Recent Changes in the Pattern of Economic Pursuits

Far-reaching, though peaceful, political and economic changes have recently occurred in Kashmir, and these have deprived Pandits of their privileged economic position (see Madan 1961a). The Hindu monarchy came to an end and a 'national Government' consisting of Hindus as well as Muslims was installed in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in 1948. This Government soon introduced radical reforms for the advancement of the tenantry in the villages. In the first year of its office the Government abolished privileged forms of land tenure, deferred by one year the realization of debts, reduced the rent for tenancies, distributed free of cost State owned land to the landless labourers, and prohibited the ejection of tenants by landlords.

In 1950 the *Distressed Debtors' Relief Act* was passed (see Brecher 1953, p. 158). Later in the same year the Government enacted the *Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act*, under which ceilings were placed on the ownership of land—20 acres were allowed for agriculture, an acre and a half for residence, and an acre and a quarter for raising fruit trees. In 1952 the Government decided that compensation, which was to have been paid under the 1950 Act, would not be paid to the land-owners, part of whose land had been expropriated, as the tenants who had received the land were too poor to pay the requisite tax. 'The land reforms changed drastically the agricultural and social structure of Kashmir. The feudal system was abolished, landlordism disappeared, and thousands of peasants living in virtual slavery became landholders' (Korbel 1954, p. 211; also see Brecher 1953, pp. 155-62).

In the Valley these reforms inevitably favoured the Muslim majority; compared to them a greater percentage of Pandits were big landowners, and a very much smaller percentage the tenants of other landlords.

In Utrassu-Umanagri only four households—including the *mahant's*—lost land as a result of the reforms. The *mahant* owned two landed estates, both in excess of the newly imposed ceiling of 23 acres, one in his personal capacity and the other as the 'representative' of the goddess Uma. The ceiling was imposed on both the estates.

The new rates of tenancies provided that whereas the tenants of landowners owning less than 12½ acres of land will receive only one-half of the produce, the tenants of those landowners who own more than that will receive two-thirds to three-fourths of the produce. This law adversely affected 14 Pandit and two Muslim households of the village.

No Muslim household of the village lost land under the new law, but many of them who were the tenants of the Pandit landowners received the excess land confiscated from the latter. Several Pandit households, resident in Umanagri, also received land, formerly belonging to the *mahant*, in their capacity as his tenants. The maximum land thus acquired by a household was about two and a half acres.[1]

More than the material consequences of the land reforms, which adversely affected only 14 households, it was the manner in which they were enacted and enforced—swiftly and without compensation of any sort—that has created a sense of insecurity and fear among the Pandits. They regard these first measures as a portent of worse things to come. They believe that the Government will, in accordance with the declared policy of the ruling party, gradually confiscate land from every owner who does not till his own holding. From being the most prized of possessions, land has thus suddenly become devalued as a form of property.

With a Government representative of all communities in

[1] 'According to Kashmir government sources, by the end of March 1953, 188,775 acres of land were transferred to 153,399 tillers. This would indicate that each peasant received an average of 1.23 acres of land under this program' (Korbel 1954, p. 212).

power, and literacy among the Muslims rapidly increasing, the Pandits' entry into the civil services, the police and the militia have been subjected to severe competition by the majority community. The Pandits' traditional reliance upon 'state service' has thus broken down. The Muslims are also increasingly participating in retail and whole-sale trade as their economic condition is improving. Consequently, the Pandits today feel the pressing need of exploring other possible sources of income in order to relieve their feeling of insecurity.

About the same time as these drastic reforms were being introduced, the Indian Army established an ammunition depot at the village of Khundur, four miles west of Utrassu-Umanagri. The depot offered handsome monthly wages of a hundred rupees and rations for unskilled labour. Several Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri and nearby villages, upset by the political and economic changes, defied time-honoured tradition and enrolled as labourers at the depot. Although only nine Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri are at present working at the depot, yet the significance of a Pandit working as a wage-earning labourer is immense, particularly when two of these men belong to the aristocratic families of the village ; one of them also owns (along with his elder step-brother) over 12½ acres of land.

Another significant indicator of the changed times is that five men of the village have gone out of Kashmir to various north Indian cities, such as Jullunder and Simla, and taken up employment there. Another 19 have joined the armed forces, and several of them also are posted outside Kashmir. Never before 1947 had any Pandit of Utrassu-Umanagri taken up employment outside the State. All of them have, however, retained social and economic ties with the village.[2]

[2] According to unofficial reports, circulating in Srinagar in 1956-57, nearly 5,000 Pandits, mostly belonging to urban areas, had gone out of Kashmir to various parts of India since 1947 in search of employment. According to some of these migrants whom I was able to interview in Srinagar, New Delhi and Lucknow the main reasons for the exodus are 'uncertainty about the political future of Kashmir', and 'better economic prospects outside Kashmir'. Most of these migrants have not as yet severed their ties with their kith and kin in Kashmir; in fact, many of them retain economic ties with their natal households.

Present-day Sources of Household Income

Seventy-nine of the 87 Pandit households of Utrassu-Umanagri own land; ownership of land is thus the most common source of household income. But only 22 land-owning households do not derive income from any other source. The major sources of household income are shown in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

SOURCES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Sources of income	*Nature of income*		*Number of households*	*Number of individual earners*
Ownership of land	*Kind*:	Grain and fruits	79	—
	Cash:	Sale of surplus produce		
Salaried service, civil and military (including pensioners)		Salary or pension	54	80
Wages (domestic servants and labourers)	*Kind*: *Cash*:	Ration Wages	14	15
Shop-keeping[a]		Profits on sales	15	17[b]

[a] It has not been possible to determine with any certainty the number of households who carry on trade without shop-keeping.

[b] Shop-keeping is not regarded as the exclusive responsibility of any one male member of the household. At times even children may sit at the shop while an older member of the household is otherwise engaged. However, it was in the case of only two shops that more than one adult member of the household spent considerable time at it, having nothing else to do.

Besides the above, four households (the *mahant's* and of the sons of Keshavanand) (see above, p. 59) receive pensions from a

religious trust for the performance of devotions. In 1957 five households earned a monthly cash income in the form of rental of household accommodation; in three houses the tenants were school teachers, in one a government employee, and in the other my wife and I were resident in one half of the house.

Cultivation of land belonging to others is practised by only two households on a share-in-the-crop basis.

The relative incidence of the various sources of household income is shown in Table IX. For the purpose of this table, income from cultivation and household accommodation have been excluded because of their temporary nature.

TABLE IX

INCIDENCE OF THE SOURCES OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Source of income	*Land only*	*Land and salary*	*Land and wages*	*Land and shop-keeping*	*Land, wages and salary*	*Land, shop-keeping and salary*	*Land, shop-keeping and wages*	*Salary only*	*Wages only*	*Total number of households*
Frequency	22	32	4	3	6	9	3	7	1	87

As already stated, only 14 Pandit households own more than 12½ acres of agricultural land, and of these only three own 23 or more (but less than 46) acres of land. The size of the holding thus is very small in most cases. Nonetheless, the Pandits' dependence upon agricultural land is still considerable. As shown in Tables VIII and IX, not only do more Pandit households (79 out of 87) of the village depend upon the ownership of land as a means of livelihood than on any other source, but 22 of them also have no other means of livelihood. Further, in 1956, a year of average harvest, 36 (40 per cent) of the land-owning households were able to obtain eight to twelve months' requirements of grain from their own land. Twenty-one of these households obtained grain for a full one year's consumption,

and six others were able to sell surplus produce. Rice is the staple of Kashmiri diet, but only a few households of Utrassu-Umanagri are able to raise all the paddy they need, as only wheat and maize can be grown in the upper parts of the village (the *pati* of Umanagri). The Umanagri households, however, own wet paddy lands in Utrassu and several other villages within a radius of about ten miles.

The most significant recent trend in the economic situation of the Pandit households of Utrassu-Umanagri, however, has been towards a greater reliance on individual effort and cash income. Thus 92 out of 192 adult males (48 per cent) are actively engaged in earning cash incomes.[3] It seems that the number of such active earners was only about 60 in 1947. The proportion of adult males to the total Pandit population of the village, as well as the total population itself, have not altered significantly during these nine years. The rise by 32 in the number of active earners cannot be, therefore, explained away by invoking demographic factors.

Collective and Individual Incomes

The Pandits regard all income from any source whatever as the joint income of the household. Income from the ownership and/or cultivation of land, trade, and shopkeeping usually is not the outcome of any individual member's sole efforts, but wage or salary earnings are, of course, by an individual. To the extent to which individual earnings are not an important part of the household income, the solidarity of the joint household is maintained without much difficulty.

The individual earner may not be coresident with other members of his household, but working away from home. Thus, 69 of the total number of wage-earning and salaried men of Utrassu-Umanagri are absent from home for most of the year. Therefore, they provide for their individual requirements before they send any money home. Absentee earners usually send money home willingly, both out of a sense of duty and

[3] Three of the 80 salaried persons shown in Table VIII are not active earners but retired pensioners. The figure of 92 active earners has been obtained by adding the number of salaried persons (77) to that of wage earners (15).

kinship sentiment, as also in justification of their own retention of rights in the joint estate.

A member with a personal income who stays at home gives all his earnings to the head of the household. If the extent of his income is known, as is usually the case, it is not possible for him to retain part of it. He is not expected to have any needs which the *paterfamilias* does not know of. Contributions and needs are standardized in the Pandit household; every adult male member is expected to contribute to the *chulah* income to the best of his ability, and what he receives is determined by his needs and the available resources. His contribution to the household income does not by itself entitle him to any special consideration. The system discourages individual initiative by refusing to recognize and reward it.

An earning member of a joint household may sooner or later decide that the extent of his contribution to the household income outweighs his obligation towards other members of the household, *other than his own wife and children,* and the benefits he derives from its membership. Such dissatisfaction with joint housekeeping usually arises when a *chulah* is in the developmental phase of a fraternal-extended family. A feeling of economic injustice, supplemented by other grievances and structural strains, leads to fission in the household and partition of the joint estate.

Partitions are not a recent phenomenon though the Pandits often talk as if they were. Nevertheless, the changed economic conditions have made it inevitable that individuals earn at different rates. Consequently, partitions between brothers may be expected to take place sooner in the future than has been usual in the past.[4]

An interim consequence of the recent economic changes has

[4] Lewis has several pertinent observations on how the family concept of a community narrows as the standard of income rises, and 'greater difference in wealth and income between the various members of the family' emerges (1955, p. 113).

Also cf. '. . . if a cash crop is introduced into a society of subsistence farmers holding estates on the basis of joint families, the conversion of the subsistence into a cash economy will necessarily produce competition between the component families and lead to the breaking of wider kinship ties' (Epstein 1962, p. 178).

been, curiously enough, the retarding of partition in some cases. An individual earner who does not live at home with his wife and children, nor is able to take them away with him, is obliged to continue his membership of a joint household. Radhakrishan, a police sergeant, is one such man, and there are over a dozen others like him. If he obtains his share of the joint estate from his elder brother, he will have several problems to face. Thus, he will have to depend upon the honesty and good-will of his tenants for his rightful share of the agricultural produce as he will not be able to supervise their operations. Besides, he will have to leave his wife and young children in the village without the help and protection of an adult male. Both tradition and the nature of his official duties preclude him from taking them away with him. If he does manage to do so, the level of his income and the absence of suitable residential facilities in the village or town in which he is posted will make the move uneconomical.

With land no longer the valued possession it was, interest in ancestral landed estates may be expected to wane in the future as they decline in value by successive partitions. This may in turn encourage mobility and the preference for smaller households.

Household Income, Patterns of Spending, and Levels of Living

As will be seen in Table X, the variation in yearly household income among the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri is considerable. For the purpose of calculating the value of paddy, which was not sold, I have employed the rates fixed by the Government in autumn 1956 for the acquisition of grain from farmers. The values of other agricultural produce, such as wheat and oil-seeds, also not sold, are based upon market rates which were current in the town of Anantnag at the same time.

The lowest income of about Rs. 160 accrued to a two-member household from land (in kind) and from the rent of part of its house let out to an outsider living in the village. The highest income of about Rs. 4,000 was earned by a three-generation household of 18 members. Its sources of income were land, trade, shopkeeping, and the salaries of two members.

TABLE X

DIFFERENCES IN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR 1956

Approximate income	*Number of households*	*Size of household:* *Range*	*Average (approx.)*
Rs. 100- 500	17	1-7	4
Rs. 501-1,000	28	3-8	5
Rs. 1,001-1,500	24	2-8	5
Rs. 1,501-2,000	8	4-12	7
Rs. 2,001-2,500	4	7-11	9
Rs. 2,501-3,000	2	8-13	10
Rs. 3,001-3,500	1	14	14
Rs. 3,501-4,000	3	9-18	13

Of the 10 households which earned more than Rs. 2,000, eight were extended families and only two nuclear families. In the past the large size of a household did not necessarily guarantee a high income, as it does now, because of the notion that it is humiliating, and indicative of dire poverty, for the members of a household to seek to earn cash incomes. Nowadays, not only are the villagers able to obtain better-paid jobs, in view of their higher standards of education, but the old attitude towards manual labour and the concealment of economic need also is changing. But as already stated, large households, consisting of extended families, are less likely to survive long when several members are earning cash incomes at different rates. Thus, the 18-member household mentioned above was partitioned in 1958.

The above-given range in household income is not reflected in a proportionate variety in the patterns of spending. There are two reasons for this: firstly the money value of grain does not indicate the utility of an adequate food supply in a peasant economy; and secondly, a high income is not so much reflected in the pattern of spending as in the level of living. The principal items of household expenditure are the same for all households. They are:

(1) Food (rice, wheat, maize, vegetables, mustard oil, salt, tea, sugar, spices, milk, yoghourt, *ghee*, meat, fish etc.).
(2) Firewood, and kerosene (for lamps).
(3) Clothing and bedding.
(4) Domestic utensils, matting and furniture.
(5) Payments in kind and/or cash to the providers of 'specialist' services (barber, potter, washerman, blacksmith, basket-weaver etc.).
(6) Gifts to married female agnates and their relatives-in-law.
(7) Domestic rituals (births and birthdays, initiations and marriages, deaths and death anniversaries).
(8) Medicines, and physician's and midwife's fees.
(9) Travel to the town and other villages.
(10) Land revenue, house tax and other payments to the government.
(11) House repairs.

Besides the above, the only major item on which a rich household may spend money are fodder for cattle, domestic servants, and entertainment. The only luxuries (regarded as such by the villagers) found in the village are a battery-operated radio set (one household), newspapers (three households), bicycles (nine households) and time pieces (over a dozen households). The amount spent on the various items varies from household to household according to the availability of surplus grain and cash money.

To illustrate the differences in the levels of living, we may take the example of food. The winter months of 1957-58 were of acute food shortage all over rural Kashmir. In Utrassu-Umanagri the richer households were able to draw upon their stocks of paddy, and even buy rice in the town of Anantnag at exorbitant prices. The poorer households resorted to eating wheat and maize which are not normally eaten for the main meals, but only at breakfast and with the afternoon tea. During the previous summer, which was not a period of hardship, the household with the lowest income, consisting of a widow and her son, did not buy meat or fish even once, whereas the richer households spent on it almost every fortnight, if not every week. The latter use *ghee* as well as mustard oil in cooking, and

consume milk every day, buying it from milkmen if they do not have milch cows of their own. The widow uses only mustard oil, and buys a little milk occasionally for her afternoon tea. But an average meal in her home, as also in the homes of the richest households, consists of rice, and vegetables cooked in mustard oil. Similarly the clothes she and her son wear exactly resemble the clothes worn by the women and boys of the richer households, though the materials in the case of the former are often of poorer quality. In short, the spending patterns of the rich and the poor are considerably similar, but they spend at different rates.

Income differences are most clearly reflected in the property owned by a house. In fact, the size of the income of a household is partly a consequence of the property it owns ; and the extent of property it owns is partly determined by the size of its total income.

II

Joint Ownership of Property

THE HOUSEHOLD estate is known as *jadad* among the Pandits, and generally consists of corporeal property only. The only incorporeal rights that are regarded as part of the *jadad* are the hereditary rights of a *gor* household to officiate as priests to their client *chulahs,* and receive in return payments in cash and kind. These rights can be transferred, partitioned, or abandoned just like any other corporeal possessions.

Possessive rights in human beings (see Radcliffe-Brown 1950, p. 12) are also recognised. The best example is the rights of a man in his wife as his mate and housekeeper. Although such rights are economically non-productive, yet they have an economic value. They are usually individually owned, and cannot be inherited, transferred, or partitioned.

The Pandits classify *jadad* as immovable or movable. The main types of immovable property are land, fruit trees, and the messuage excluding the granary which is so constructed (on four wooden posts and of wooden planks) that it can be easily

dismantled and reerected at another place. The main types of movable property are the granary, grain, domestic furniture and utensils, clothing, bedding, gold and silver ornaments, jewellery, cattle, and cash. The *jadad* is usually composed of an ancestral portion, inherited from a previous generation, as also of a portion which has been acquired by the living members of the household.

Household property is jointly owned by the natal (agnatically related) male members of the *chulah*. Female members, whether agnates or spouses, do not have the rights of ownership and disposal in such property, nor are they usually expected to contribute or add to it. The only right they have is that of maintenance. Before her marriage, a woman's right of maintenance is exactly identical with that of her brothers, but her marriage alters her jural position. In case she is not sent away from her natal home, and her husband comes to live with her, she is, in effect, being treated *as if* she were a son, for, as we already know, that normal rule of post-marital residence in Pandit society is patrivirilocal. The consequence of this reversal of the normal rule of residence is that a woman acquires the rights of ownership and disposal in the *jadad* of the natal household *similar* to those of a male agnate; she inherits property from her father and transmits it to her sons (not daughters also). Her rights are not, however, *identical* with those of a male agnate, because her altered status in her own natal household does not alter her jural status as a female agnate so far as other households in her natal family are concerned.

When Maheshwarnath's parents-in-law invited him to live with them, they had only one infant son. After his marriage another son was born to them. Subsequently, after their death a partition took place between the three siblings, and Maheshwarnath's wife received one-third of her parental estate. She and her husband, however, abandoned her claim to a share in the house when they built one of their own. In fact, the main reason why the parents of a man agree to a patriuxorilocal marriage for him is their calculation that his wife will eventually inherit from her father and transmit the property to her sons. One of the single member households of Utrassu-Umanagri consists of a middle-aged widow who has given her

son away in marriage in the hope that he will return to her, after the death of his parents-in-law, a richer man.

If a woman is married patrivirilocally, as is usual, she loses the right of maintenance in the natal home except in certain contingencies, viz. if she becomes a widow, or if her husband deserts her. But she acquires the same right in her conjugal home. Moreover, she also retains the right to periodically visit and receive gifts from her natal household. Most important of all, she receives a marriage portion, known as *stridhan* ('woman's wealth'), which she carries with her to her new home. It consists of such personal possessions as clothes, ornaments, domestic utensils, bedding etc. The rich parents of a girl may even give her cattle and land. The *stridhan* is, jurally speaking, a woman's exclusive property, and may be regarded as a substitute for the right of inheritance. Her husband and relatives-in-law acquire no interest in it, and her daughters are expected to inherit it after her death. In practice her parents-in-law show immense interest in her *stridhan,* and may take away the best of her personal possessions to give to their own daughters. The domestic utensils and other household effects which she brings with her are, in any case, put into household use and treated as joint property. It is also usual for a daughter-in-law to receive some of the personal possessions of her mother-in-law when the latter dies.[5]

The jural right of exclusive ownership may, however, be asserted in certain cases. Kashinath's first wife had been dead several years, and he had already remarried, when he and his brothers partitioned their joint estate. Kashinath insisted that whatever of his second wife's *stridhan* was still in existence should be restored to her, and whatever remained of his first wife's *stridhan* should be made over to him for use at the time of the marriage of his daughter by his first wife. He was able to obtain most of the clothing and ornaments that he claimed but only some of the domestic utensils.

The male members acquire an interest in the joint property

[5] '*Stridhana* or women's estate with a specific devolution counterbalancing the exclusion of women from coparcenary succession is another feature of Hindu Law . . . ' (Alexandrovicz, ed., 1958, p. 6, quoted in Dumont 1961, p. 95).

of their household from the moment of their birth,[6] though only adults may claim partition. Further, so long as the estate is jointly held, no member can lay exclusive claim to any part of it, except what is the product of his own individual efforts and unconnected with the joint estate. In practice this distinction between a man's joint and self-acquired property is nearly impossible to establish. He must be able to prove that he neither used any part of the joint estate, nor exploited his privileges as a member of the joint household, in acquiring what he claims to be his exclusive income or property.

So long as the joint estate remains undivided, all male members of the household are regarded as coparceners with equal rights. The household estate is managed by the eldest male coparcener who is known as the *karta* (organizer). He is usually related as father or grandfather, or as brother or uncle, to the other coparceners. He may have all the four types of genealogical connexion with them, or only one. It may be stressed here that any household consisting of only two natal male members, howsoever related (whether as father and son, brother and brother, uncle and nephew, or in any other manner), but owning an estate in common, constitute a coparcenary. It is obvious that, contrary to general belief, such a joint household need not be an extended family. In Kashmir it often is a nuclear family (see Madan 1962b and 1962c).

The *karta* has the sole responsibility for all the decisions about household matters, including the allocation of economic resources and tasks, but in practice he *usually* consults his wife and other adult male members of the *chulah*, who may persuade or coerce him to take decisions against his own judgement. Thus, in a dispute over ancestral residential land, Kailas was willing to make an allowance for the fact that unless his younger brother received a little more than his full share of land he could not possibly build a house, but the former's wife and son opposed such a concession delaying a settlement by several years.

Nevertheless, a *karta* may wield considerable powers of direction and decision over the other members. He does so, not so

[6] It seems that under Hindu Law a male coparcener acquires his right of ownership from the moment of conception. See Mayne 1953, p. 521.

much by virtue of being the head of the household, as by virtue of his structural position as a lineal ascendant of the other coparceners. As father (or grandfather) he claims a personal loyalty from his sons (or grandsons) which he generally is not able to claim from his brothers and nephews. As we will see in the next chapter, household property is usually partitioned when the *karta's* management of it is disapproved of by his collateral agnates and their wives. In extreme cases, a man's own son may also challenge his authority, and press for the partition of the estate. But such occurrences are rare. Though a father has no jural right to prevent his son from claiming his share in the estate, a man is usually able to exercise considerable power over his sons because the Pandit kinship morality, with its strong accent upon filial piety, favours him.

Rights of Inheritance

So LONG as a household continues to exist as a corporation, the problem of succession does not arise. A coparcener's death enlarges the beneficial interest of the survivors, just as the birth or adoption of a new male member diminishes it. Since a coparcener has no exclusive share in the joint estate, he has no heirs but only survivors. When the joint household breaks up, and the estate is divided, the problem of the apportionment of shares crops up. So far as the rules of inheritance are concerned, shares are parcelled out on the *pir stirpes* basis (see Black 1951). Similarly, when a person dies without leaving lineal heirs behind him, his estate is divided among his collateral agnates on the same basis. Lassaram, Nilakanth and Jagannath were three brothers. After Lassaram's death his sons Shamlal and Zanardhan obtained one-third of the estate from their uncles through partition. In course of time Nilakanth, Jagannath, Shamlal and Zanardhan also died. Later Nilakanth's only son Gopinath died without leaving behind any lineal heirs. Consequently, Mohanlal (son of Shamlal) received one-fourth of Gopinath's estate, Pyarelal and Makhanlal (sons of Zanardhan) another one-fourth, and Radhakrishan (son of Jagannath) the remaining one-half (see Fig. XI).

Although women have no right to shares, their position is considered at the time of partition. A childless widow is usually

given her husband's share for the rest of her life but she does not have the right to sell it or gift it away. After her death her share reverts to her husband's collateral heirs. A share may be set apart for the maintenance and marriage of an unmarried sister and given to the brother with whom the sister stays. If such a share is not given to him, he has the right to claim financial help from his former coparceners at the time of her marriage.

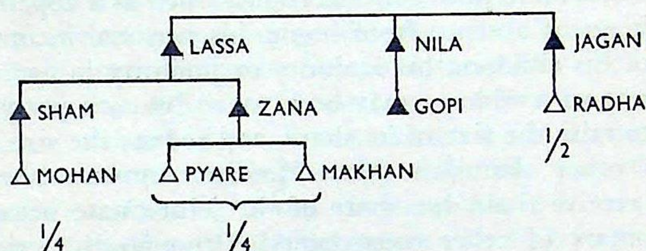


Fig. XI

In contrast to the rights of inheritance of lineal heirs are the rights of collateral agnatic heirs. These rights are contingent upon a man dying without any lineal heirs. The rights of a collateral heir are 'obstructed' by the rights of a lineal heir, and the rights of a relatively distant collateral heir by those of a closer one. When a man is survived by a married daughter, who lives patriuxorilocally, his estate is inherited by her ; but the collateral agnate (brother, nephew or cousin) who performs his obsequies is also given a small, often nominal, share from the estate of the deceased as indemnification for the expenses he incurs, as reward for his services, and above all as a reciprocal gesture symbolic of kinship rights and obligations which obtain between patrilineal kinsmen.

When shares are distributed, both debts as well as assets are divided. Veshin had died a debtor, leaving behind two sons Ramnath and Jialal. His house also was in need of repairs. While Ramnath repaid the debt and repaired the house, using his personal cash income for these purposes, Jialal, who also earned a cash income, did not give any of it to Ramnath, and also remained absent from home for long periods of time. In 1957 Jialal wanted to set up a household of his own, and asked

Ramnath to give him possession of half of the house. The latter refused to do so until Jialal paid him a sum of money equivalent to half of the amount of the debt rapaid by him and also half of the amount of expenditure incurred by him on the repairs of the house. Although Jialal was contemplating to take the case to a court of law, hoping for a favourable judgement, the opinion in the village was generally in favour of Ramnath.

The apportionment of shares does not always strictly follow the jural rules ; non-jural considerations—such as a coparcener's long or frequent absence from home, his personal income, the number of his children, his seniority or juniority in age, or his offer to support a widow—may be invoked by each party in an attempt to raise the size of its share, and reduce the size of the shares of other claimants. Most Pandits complain how they failed to receive their due share of the joint estate because of the dishonesty of other coparceners. Although the grievance may be more imagined than real in most cases, because everybody bargains hard for any concessions that he may get, yet I have been able to record several instances where the head of the household was able to manipulate the division of assets and liabilities in his own favour.

The reverse also may happen in some cases. When Shankar pressed his father Thakur to partition the household estate, the latter gave one-fourth of the estate to the former, and retained only three-fourths of it on behalf of his three younger sons. He could have divided the estate into five shares, and retained four to himself, as he also was entitled to a share as a coparcener.

Disputes concerning the division of household property are common but are usually settled by mutual agreement, though it may take years before it is reached. Common friends and relatives also are called upon to mediate or arbitrate between the disputants. The last resort of an aggrieved or bellicose person is to appeal to a court of law. But, generally speaking, the Pandits regard litigation as extremely unseemly when it takes place between closely related kinsmen, such as siblings, and try to avoid it. Moreover, there is the realization that once a case becomes *sub judice* it is not easy to manipulate the subsequent events in one's own favour. Two strikingly contrasting views upon the uncertainty involved in litigation were put

forward by my informants. While Sarwanand felt that 'the judges are bound by their law books and therefore their justice is often unjust', Bishambarnath asked, 'Is the judge my maternal uncle that he will favour me?', and added: 'He will decide on the merits of the case' (see Appendix III). The Pandits believe that a maternal uncle always will be partial to his nephews (see below, Chapter 10).

Nevertheless, people do occasionally approach the courts of law. In 1956 a widow successfully sought the intervention of the revenue court at Anantnag alleging that her son did not adequately provide for her medical treatment. The villagers thought of this as a very unusual case, and criticized both the mother as well as the son. It is a matter of considerable import in the Pandit society if a parent, particularly a mother, has to seek outside aid against a son who is remiss in his duty; it is a violation of the dictates of kinship morality on behalf of the son, and the villagers look at him with disapproval. But when a man fights with his brother, or cousin, for his economic interests, the Pandits regret it and yet accept it as being unfortunately inevitable. As the bonds of kinship become less close, the compulsions of kinship morality also become less binding in the face of economic and other interests; so much so indeed that even the children of the same parents prefer to break up their home and partition their estate, rather than sacrifice any of these interests. Such fraternal discord is the theme of the following chapter.

8

Partition of the Household

So LONG as adult men are living together, with their wives and children, under the tutelage of their father, the Pandit ideal of the joint *chulah* is easy to maintain. Not only is the moral and jural authority of a man over his sons responsible for this, but the general expectation that a man does not discriminate between his sons is also conducive to it. If he does favour one son against another, dissension is bound to arise, and the chances of cleavage in the household become real though they may not be realized in his lifetime. The father may remedy the situation before it becomes too explosive for the survival of the household. More often the aggrieved son bides his time, unwilling to come into open conflict with his father and thereby risk general disapproval of his behaviour. His mother also may act as a sobering influence.

But the situation in the household changes drastically when the father dies. Each brother seeks to protect the interests of his own wife and children, and in doing so comes into conflict with the others. The mother, if alive, still tries to keep her sons together, but generally without much success as she lacks the jural authority over them which her husband had enjoyed as the head of the household. Moreover, her own conflicts with her daughters-in-law may dispose her to take sides between them, and thereby accentuate domestic strife.

Joint living is still the ideal, but the divergence of interests between the brothers usually becomes so large as to be beyond compromise. Partition[1] is, therefore, a *normal* occurrence in the Pandit society although it lacks cultural approval. However, should economic and other interests so dictate, a man composes

[1] Throughout the following discussion, 'partition' is used to mean both the division of the estate between co-owners, so that they may hold it in severalty, as also the break-up of the household as a residential unit into two or more such units. See Black (1951).

his differences with one or more of his brothers, and a reunion of households takes place.

Partition in Relation to Household Structure

We saw in Chapter 4 that the 87 households of Utrassu-Umanagri are in different phases of development, and that no household contains more than three generations, or kin more distantly related than first cousins (if we exclude the solitary instance of second cousins living in a single household owing to its exceptional nature) (see above, p. 69). Enquiries in several other villages reveal some instances of four-generation *chulahs*, but none of second cousins living in the same household. In fact, the number of households which attain the maximum extension of three or four generations and first degree cousinship is generally small; there are only four such cases in Utrassu-Umanagri. The question which arises here is: What prevents further expansion of the household? As the following analysis will show, death and partition are the crucial events which are responsible for arresting the extension of the composition of the household.

During 1957 no partition took place in the village, although several were incipient. Nevertheless, I was able to obtain fairly full details of 50 partitions from Utrassu-Umanagri and the nearby villages of Kreri and Naogam. Thirty-six of these partitions had occurred in the previous 25 years. In 40 or four-fifths of these cases, partition occurred between brothers; in two cases between a widow and her deceased husband's brothers; and in one case between first cousins. The remaining seven were inter-generation partitions.

In 38 of the 40 partitions between brothers, the seceding brother, or at least one of the group of seceding brothers, was married and had children. Similarly, of the brothers of whom partition was demanded, at least one was married and had children. Only in three cases did a childless couple secede from the joint household consisting of two or more couples.

In all cases of partition which involved, among others, unmarried brothers, each single man sided with one, or a group, of his married brothers. No case of an unmarried man separat-

ing from his natal household to set up his own independent *chulah* was reported to me.

In six of the 40 partitions under consideration, the mother was alive when her sons separated. Two of these widows are still alive, each living with one of her sons. When a woman's sons finally decide to separate in spite of her exhortations to stay together, she has no option but to choose to live with one of them, though this does not mean that she has strained relations with the other(s).

It is of interest to note that in 33 of these 40 households, the maximum degree of extension that may be encountered in a Pandit household—represented by three or four generations and first degree cousins—had not been reached by the time of partition.

The two cases of partition between a widow and her deceased husband's brothers also are, in fact, instances of partition in fraternal-extended and joint households. One of these widows had a young son and married daughters, and the other had only married daughters. The daughters were living patrivirilocally in both cases.

Of the seven inter-generation partitions, one occurred between a man and his deceased brother's son, and another between a man and his son on the one hand, and his deceased son's son on the other. In both these cases, a man whose father had died young obtained his share of the joint estate after he had been married.

The remaining five inter-generation partitions took place between a man and his son(s) in four cases, and between a man and his patriuxorilocally married daughter in one case. The earliest of these five partitions occurred in 1910 (and the latest in 1955), disproving the assertion of many villagers that partitions between fathers and sons are a recent phenomenon.

In two of these cases, including the earliest, an old man's remarriage, after the death of his previous wife, provoked his married son(s) by the earlier marriage to press for partition. Strained relations between the newly-arrived step-mother and her married step-son(s) and his (their) wife (wives) were the immediate cause of partition in both the cases. But it seems that the real reason was the desire of each seceding son to

safeguard his interest in the joint estate in the face of a possible reduction in the size of the shares following the likely birth of sons to his step-mother.

The third case of partition between father and son is recent, and illustrates the importance which the cash income of individual members of the household has come to acquire nowadays. Nilakanth has five adult sons, but only the eldest of these, Tarachand, was earning a cash income, being a government employee. Three of the brothers, including Tarachand, were married and had children. In fact, Tarachand's eldest son also was a government employee. Desirous of getting the full benefit of his own and his son's cash incomes, Tarachand obtained his share from his old father and set up an independent household, consisting of himself, his wife, three sons and the eldest son's wife.

The fourth case of partition between a man and his sons was an unusual one involving charges of adultery by the sons, one of them married, against their widowed father.

The only instance of partition between a man and his daughter is remarkable for the complete lack of acrimony and conflict. It seems that Maheshwarnath agreed to live patri-uxorilocally because his parents-in-law had only one young son, Dayaram. When the latter grew up to be a young man, Maheshwarnath approached his father-in-law to be allowed to set up a household of his own. He had no jural right to make such a request except as his wife's guardian and spokesman. But his relations with his parents-in-law were cordial, and he had for several years made a contribution to the income of his wife's natal household. He was, therefore, allowed to secede and his wife received a one-third share in her father's estate as by then her mother had given birth to a second son.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, we may conclude that whereas the average age expectancy and the average age at marriage usually prevent a household from extending into a fourth or fifth generation, it is partition which breaks up a fraternal-extended joint household. It is also obvious that whereas partition between a man and his son(s) is rare, joint living between married brothers is, in the long run, even more rare because of the conflict between the fraternal bond on the

one hand and the conjugal and the parental bonds on the other.

Partition : Structural Conditions

The right to demand partition is acquired in Pandit society by a man at his birth, but in most cases a son does not enforce his rights as a coparcener against his father. Instead he behaves *as if* his father were the sole owner of the estate, and his own rights in it contingent upon his father's death. Besides his father's moral and jural authority and the demands of filial piety already referred to above, self interest also may preclude a man from demanding his share from his father. The latter is entitled to retain a share for himself in his individual capacity as a coparcener, thus reducing the size of the share which a seceding son of his can get. Moreover, his sons have no claim to his self-acquired property during his lifetime. In view of these jural, moral and economic considerations, it is not surprising that a man rarely revolts against his father, but generally does so against his brother. Therefore, we may conclude that the first structural condition for the occurrence of partition between brothers is that their father should be dead.

A Pandit is unable to take advantage of his right to secede from his joint household unless he is able to set up a household of his own, and this he can do only if he is married. In rare cases a man may depend upon his mother or sister (unmarried, or married but widowed) to run his home for him, but it is usually the wife who does this. His mother, if too old, would not be expected to live long. If his unmarried sister is grown up enough to keep house for him, then she is also of marriageable age and will have to be married off before long. I was able to record only one instance of an unmarried man setting up a household with the aid of his unmarried sister from the village of Naogam. Further, an unmarried man is not subject to the same contrary pulls which a married man is. Marriage creates new bonds for a man—between him and his wife and children—which do not harmonize with his old bonds—between him and his brothers—, and also places him in a situation which enables him to set up an independent household when doing so seems to be to his best advantage. It is, however, only rarely that marriage

immediately results in partition. In only one of the 42 cases of partition in fraternal-extended joint households, discussed above, did a man separate from his elder brother immediately after his own marriage.

Whenever a Pandit couple have two or more sons, the basic precondition for a future partition (between the brothers) may be said to obtain. But it is not till their father is dead, and at least two of the brothers are married, that a partition is likely to take place.

Partition : Causes

The structural conditions within which partition is usually achieved are in no way the causative conditions which actually bring it about. Let us now examine what these causes are. Conflicts arise out of the fundamental situation that prevails in the fraternal-extended household. It consists of several nuclear families which are related through the sibling bond. Between these brothers there is a feeling of uneasiness. As sons of the same parents, and as coparceners, they are equals. But according to the Pandit norms, age differences give rise to differential status: the older men, by virtue of their being older, have authority over their younger brothers, who are expected to be deferential and respectful towards them. Moreover, the eldest brother customarily succeeds to his father's position as head of the household when the father dies. As *paterfamilias* the eldest brother is elevated to the position of the father himself—a fact which his younger brothers, particularly those close to him in age, do not always like. The eldest brother himself is under strain due to his personal loyalty towards his own wife and children, and his moral obligation to treat all members of the household equally without discrimination.

Conflicts between the brothers usually arise over the running of the household, the distribution of food, clothes and other rewards to *chulah* members, and the rearing of children. Underlying these disagreements is a deeper feeling of antagonism and heartburning. Estrangement between adult siblings is a salient feature of the Pandit family system. As children, siblings who are close to each other in age grow up together and there is much friendliness and devotion between them. When on attain-

ing adulthood a man is married, new interests enter his life, and he even starts thinking of the day when he will have a household of his own. He develops an attachment to his wife and children and indicates his interest in their welfare. Such interest often brings him into conflict with his siblings. The aggrieved siblings retaliate. On other occasions he is similarly hurt by the devotion which his brothers show to their wives and children in preference to him. Their relations thus become strained.

So far as sisters are concerned they are not deeply involved in these conflicts. Before relations between a man and his sister become very strained, she is married out of the household. Not only is she removed physically from her natal home, her rights as an agnate are also limited. She is not a coparcener, unless married patriuxorilocally, and does not pose any threat to the interests of her brothers. But no such resolution of conflict is possible between brothers, and their dissensions proceed invariably towards partition.

The Pandits greatly emphasize the part which the wives of brothers play in these dissensions.[2] Sisters-in-law are in almost all cases unrelated before their marriage. After their marriage and during the lifetime of their mother-in-law, they are all under her supervision and control. But when she dies they come under the control of the wife of the eldest brother ; though it is unusual, she may not be also the eldest of them all in age. The other sisters-in-law do not like the elevation of one of them to the status of the mistress of the house, and always try to assert their equality with her in status, and even their personal superiority over her as housewives.

When there are more than two sisters-in-law in a household,

[2] Quarrels among women in the Hindu domestic family seem to be a widespread phenomenon. Cf.: (*i*) 'The relationship between the various women in the joint family is frequently one of conflict. . . . The conflicts between the women in the patrilocal *okka* (joint family) strike at its solidarity' (Srinivas 1952, pp. 54f.). (*ii*) 'The intrigues and jealousies among the womenfolk in a joint family are the despair of men' (Dube 1955, p. 155). (*iii*) 'Partitions . . . are usually the result of quarrels between the men or women of the joint household' (Mayer 1960, p. 241). Also see Mayer 1961, p. 170.

Writing more generally, Majumdar observes that 'the quarrels of the wives may act as the catalytic factor in family dissension' (1958, p. 168).

they have disagreements with each other, though they do also form temporary alliances. They quarrel over their own relative importance in terms of the contribution their husbands make to the upkeep of the household and the management of the estate. They disagree over whose natal household is of better standing and more prosperous, and who among them receives more and better gifts from her parents. They also quarrel over their children, each accusing the other of discrimination in favour of her own children, and telling her that her children are misbehaved and spoilt. There are also conflicts over the distribution of work. In short, sisters-in-law seem to be always disagreeing with each other, so much so that if two particular sisters-in-law do not have any disputes, the Pandit regard it as rather unusual.

The main reason for these bickerings between sisters-in-law is that they constantly find themselves in situations within the household in which their rights and duties are not clearly defined, and in which each appears as a competitor of the other. Moreover, sisters-in-law are not inhibited in their relations with each other to the same extent by considerations of morality and kinship sentiment as are their husbands. Whereas a man may be willing to work under his brother, and partially subordinate his personal interests for the sake of his brothers, nephews and nieces, his wife generally does not like to do this. Her husband's agnates are no kin of hers. She wants independence and seeks the fulfilment which a woman finds only when she is the mistress of her own household. Again, the attitude of a woman towards her sisters-in-law is sometimes influenced by her parents who exhort her to exercise her rights and not to be submissive.

The quarrels between sisters-in-law would neither be so frequent nor so important as to lead to partition, were not the brothers indirect participants in them and interested in their development. Such quarrels are contributory factors towards the partition of the household, but they only become of decisive importance after the solidarity of brothers has been greatly weakened. The brothers in a fraternal-extended household are in a dilemma. There is a conflict in their minds between the ideal of fraternal amity and co-operation on the one hand, and immediate and long-term personal advantage on the other.

According to Pandit kinship morality, quarrels between brothers are of much greater significance, than are the bickerings between their wives, as they lead directly to partition. When two brothers desire to partition the household and the estate, they also desire to avoid social disapproval, and try to blame each other for intransigence. They also invariably blame their wives for alienating brother from brother, but connive at their bickerings and even encourage them. When I asked Sudarshan why he allowed his wife to force him to separate from his brother, he pleaded that he felt it was his duty to defend her although he knew she was wrong. He argued that she had no one else except him to call her own in her conjugal home, as their only child, a son, was quite young. The Pandit men thus measure out moral sentiment against personal feelings and advantage, and avoid facing the problem of conflict between these two frontally. Instead they try to resolve it indirectly by quarrelling through their wives, as it were. And when the end has been achieved— the household and the estate partitioned— they tend to put the blame on their wives. It is likely that this rationalization is partly unconscious, but it is a rationalization nonetheless.[3]

In some cases, a man is less circumspect than others, and readily comes to blows with his brothers. But the Pandits most emphatically disapprove of such conduct, particularly if it is the elder brother who is induced into physically fighting his younger brothers. Partition, though a normal feature of Pandit kinship, is deprecated, particularly if prior to its achievement (to quote one of my informants) 'brothers fight as if they were strangers, forgetting their common origin'. In the nature of things the achievement of partition is in most cases accompanied by tensions and conflict; hence the Pandit brothers' dilemma. That they usually decide to partition the household and the estate is due to both their personal interest and the attitude of their wives.

Sometimes a fraternal-extended household of two brothers may weather these early storms and not break up till their sons grow up into adults. Even a third (junior) generation may be

[3] Cf. '*Division of the joint family may thus be brought about by disputes among brothers or cousins, though for the sake of appearance it may be attributed to friction among wives*' (Berreman 1963, p. 175).

added to the household. There are two such cases in Utrassu-Umanagri. When tensions arise in this phase of development, the forces working for partition are very strong. As will be shown in the next chapter, fraternal conflicts are strongly reflected in the relations between paternal uncles and nephews, and find almost unmitigated expression in hostility between cousins. The feelings of kinship sentiment and the considerations of morality and social disapproval, which suppress open expression of hostility between brothers, are less compulsive in inter-cousin relations. Paternal cousins usually quarrel without the qualms which inhibit their fathers, and tend to support their mothers in their desire for partition.

Howsoever the Pandits may deprecate it, the fraternal bond always breaks down in the face of conflict with the conjugal and parental bonds and self-interest. There are no households in Utrassu-Umanagri in which the senior generation includes first paternal cousins, nor have any such *chulahs* been there in the last 25 years or so. The Pandits maintain that disputes between brothers were less common in the past. It may be conjectured that they were not less common, but did not in all cases inevitably lead to partition. This is quite likely considering the economic and social advantages that accrued to households with bigger land holdings, although the partition of bigger estates must also have been economically less disadvantageous than the partition of smaller land holdings. Moreover, very few Pandits earned personal incomes in past days. Nevertheless, cases of large joint and extended households, including cousins in the senior generation, must have been rare. I was not able to record any such instance, although (as already stated above) I was able to get details of two cases of partition between a man and his deceased brother's adult son. Commenting on partitions between brothers, Bishambharnath said to me: 'Don't believe those old men who tell you they were born in better times than ours; brothers have quarrelled since the time of Abel and Cain and longer.'[4] Nowadays, with more Pandits earning personal incomes than ever before, and at unequal

[4] This statement was made in Kashmiri, but the informant can read and speak English and, though a Hindu himself, is familiar with several biblical stories (see Appendix III).

rates, the ideal of the individual estate is gaining ground. It seems that in future, partition between brothers will occur as often as it does now, but considerations of economic advantage will play a greater and more decisive part in bringing them about than at present.

A Case History

As an illustration of the kind of data on which the foregoing analysis is based we may now present a brief description of two cases of partition. Kailas was the only son of his parents, and inherited from his father a three-storeyed house (built in 1899), a walnut tree, several cows and calves, and occupancy rights in about 26 acres of land. He died in 1916, and was survived by his widow, two sons, and their wives and children. (For the sake of convenience no mention will be made of dead children and married daughters in this case history.) Kailas's widow died in 1924.

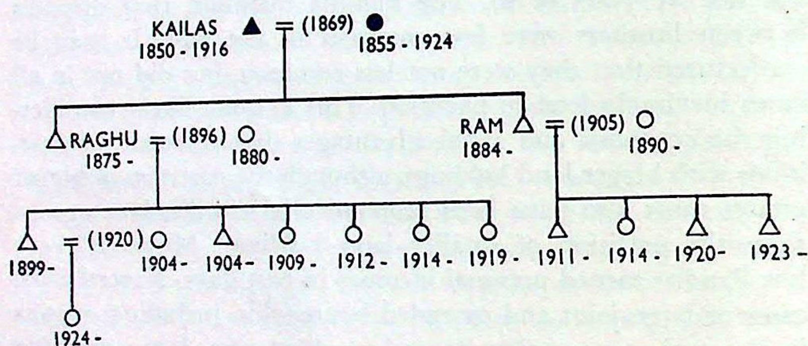


Fig. XII(a)

A year later Raghu celebrated the marriages of his second son and eldest daughter with considerable pomp and show. It seems that Ram wanted the initiation rites of his five-year-old son to be performed on the same occasion, but Raghu suggested that the same could take place a couple of years later. Ram was much annoyed by what he regarded his elder brother's selfishness, high-handedness and extravagance. He started grumbling about the manner in which Raghu was spending cash savings of the household which had been accu-

mulated from the sale of surplus grain. A few months after the marriage Ram's wife quarrelled with Raghu's wife, telling the latter that the household would become impoverished by the time all her daughters were married. It may be noted here that Ram had only two daughters, the elder of whom had been married in 1920, whereas Raghu had four daughters. Raghu's wife reported this to her husband who felt that his honesty was being doubted and his children had been counted. The Pandits believe that counting children brings illness and even death to them; therefore, if a person mentions the large number of another's children, the latter takes it ill. Accordingly Raghu asked Ram to reprimand his wife, but the latter asserted that his wife had done no wrong. He also told several villagers that he was making a sacrifice in not demanding partition, pointing out that he had only four children as against Raghu's six children, one daughter-in-law, and one grandchild. Raghu, on hearing of this, complained that his children had been counted again; therefore, he suggested that they divide the household and their joint estate, and Ram readily agreed to this.

The partition was achieved fairly smoothly. Raghu took possession of the left half of their house, and Ram of the right half. All other property (occupancy rights in land, grain, domestic utensils, bedding etc.) were also divided without much difficulty. There was some disagreement over cattle, but Ram finally agreed to accept only one milch cow and two calves, leaving two cows and three calves to his elder brother. The cowshed, the granary, and two walnut trees (of unequal age) were not divided. It was decided that the total number of walnuts would be divided equally each year. The use of the courtyard also was unaffected by the partition, but the kitchen garden was divided into two equal parts.

By 1954, when Ram died, his household had grown into a three generation 15-member paternal-extended family. Besides 13 acres of land which the household owned, Ram had been also running a grocery shop since 1929, and had constructed a new house in 1944 after selling his share in the ancestral house to Raghu's sons. His youngest son Janki was employed as a school teacher and his grandson Gopi as a land revenue record-keeper.

The relations between Ram's sons had been somewhat strained since Janki's marriage; his wife came of a rich household from a neighbouring town, and her behaviour annoyed her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law who regarded her as an

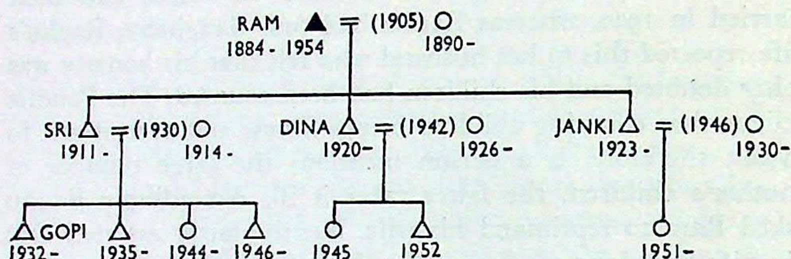


Fig. XII(b)

upstart. The fact of Janki's being posted in another village, however, kept the conflict under check. But Dina's differences with his elder brother Sri, who was now the head of the household, kept widening. He did not like to be subservient to Sri who, he thought, was concealing the full extent of his son Gopi's income. The amount of Gopi's meagre salary was, of course, known to everybody, but he is a clever young man believed to earn a sizable additional income by the distribution of favours.

In 1956 Dina persuaded Janki to join him in demanding partition from Sri. The former was keen on enlisting the latter's support probably because if the two stayed together the blame would in all likelihood fall upon Sri. It is, moreover, probable that Janki's salary also entered into Dina's calculations. Janki did not need much persuasion as he was already under pressure from his wife to seek a division. But he felt that he had to join one of his elder brother's households as his wife and child would be otherwise left alone; if he were to take them away with him his interests, above all in land, would suffer by default.

Ram's old widow was much distressed by the happenings, and chose to live with her eldest son. Her dislike of her youngest daughter-in-law was the major factor in her choice. She also probably realized that Dina was the main force behind the move to partition the household and the estate.

The division of assets turned out to be a very complicated and protracted process. The shop proved to be the main problem, and Sri ultimately succeeded in getting sole possession of it by buying out his brothers' interest in it. However, he had to be content with only four rooms out of a total of 13 in their house. The division of assets took several months to settle, but nobody seemed to be satisfied with what had been agreed upon even a year after the partition had taken place.

The Process of Partition

Among the members of a household only coparceners can demand partition. Legally only 'majors' may do so, but it seems that in practice any adult (in the physical sense of the term) is able to bring it about. While I was in Utrassu-Umanagri, a partition occurred in the nearby village of Naogam when a boy, aged 17, and legally a 'minor', obtained shares on behalf of himself and his 12-years-old sister from his father, alleging maltreatment by their step-mother and step-brothers. A patri-uxorilocally married female agnate also can demand partition, but an unmarried or a patrivirilocally married female agnate (even if the latter may have returned to her natal home after her widowhood), does not have the jural right to ask for division. The position of a wife is intermediate. She may ask for partition, in the name of her deceased husband, on her own behalf, or on behalf of her children.[5] But she does not acquire a vested right in her share of the estate, and cannot alienate it. If she is childless, the estate reverts to her husband's collateral heirs after her death. If she has children, they hold vested rights in it. The Pandit wife can ask for maintenance but has no rights of inheritance in her conjugal household.

When demanding partition, a coparcener need not advance any reason for his action, as it is his 'birth-right' to make such a claim. Therefore, partition is a traditional expectation of the Pandit family system. The timing of partition is, however, based, not on the caprice of individuals, but on predictable

[5] A joint letter from some of my informants, dated Utrassu-Umanagri, January 26, 1959, informs me of a partition which a woman achieved on behalf of herself (and her children?) from her husband. I do not have the details of this very unusual and interesting case.

crucial events, and structural and economic strains. When a man asks for partition, his coparceners may try to avoid it, but cannot refuse him if he insists on it. A man loses the right to demand partition only if he is insane; he loses the right of inheritance also if he becomes a convert to Islam, or deserts the village of his birth. But if a man becomes a Muslim, or deserts his village, after obtaining partition, he retains his individually owned estate. There is only one former Pandit in Utrassu-Umanagri who is now living there as a Muslim. He is a homeless beggar and owns no property. If a coparcener is temporarily absent, his rights are not affected in any way, although if he is unable to be present at the time of the apportionment of shares, he may receive less than is his due.

In most cases it is one of the younger brothers who asks for partition. This, as may be expected, is because of the privileged position of the eldest brother and his wife, as also his moral obligation towards his younger siblings. Older people are expected to have patience and forgive the young for their misbehaviour. For an elder brother to force partition on his younger brother amounts to the abandonment of the former's kinship and moral responsibilities, and this is sure to provoke criticism from their common kin and other villagers.

After partition has been agreed upon, the coparceners take a decision regarding the extent and form of partition. In some cases the disputing brothers decide that the source of conflict lies in the working out of domestic relations and the distribution of consumer's goods at home, and therefore, only the partition of the *chulah* as a residential and consumption unit is called for. The *chulah* is a multifunctional group, and can be broken up with reference to only some of its functions. Thus, a *partial* partition takes place; the *chulah* as a residential and consumption unit is broken up, but its members continue to hold immovable property in common. To take an example, Maheshwarnath and his brother's son Choonilal live in two households, in two different houses, but own their land in common, and divide the total produce into two shares. Similarly Mahadev, his brother Vasdev, and their father's brother's sons, Srikanth and Premnath, jointly own walnut trees. Amarnath and his father's brother's sons own walnut trees and a

cowshed in common. Even when the parties to a dispute decide on a complete severence of residential and economic ties, this may not be possible because of the impartibility of some kinds of property, like the dwelling house, cattle and fruit trees as also sacred household pottery and icons. Therefore, partition between brothers is usually partial, and they continue to hold some property in common. The partition of the household is not a single act, but a continuing process which may go on for two, or even three generations. When impartible property becomes relatively valueless by intrinsic loss of value (like dead cattle, or old fruit trees which bear little or no fruit), or by the diminished value of potential shares, some coparceners may abandon their claims to such property, or transfer it to others, either with or without some consideration in return. It is only then that complete partition is achieved (see Chapter 9).

Reunion of Households

Once a partition has been agreed upon, and its details worked out, it is usually final, although the working out of these details may take several years. The reunion of households, or the amalgamation of separate estates, is very rare; it has happened only thrice in Utrassu-Umanagri in the past 25 years. In two of these cases two brothers joined their separate households after having earlier broken away from a bigger fraternal-extended household. One of these reunions has been already described (see above, pp. 61f). There is reason to anticipate that when these smaller fraternal-extended households develop further, the union will be again dissolved.

The third case was rather unusual. Jialal obtained his share of the joint estate from his father's brother' sons, Mahtabram and Makundram, who were much older than him. Later he died and was survived by his mother, wife and daughter. Subsequently his wife married one of Mahtabram's sons and the two households reunited. This is incidentally the only household in the village in which second cousins are living together (see above, p. 69).

In the Pandit society partition is the solution of the conflict between the fraternal bond on the one hand, and the conjugal and the parental bonds on the other. This conflict is regarded

as regrettable but inevitable ; in the general manner of its solution—partition—may be seen the dominance of personal considerations, such as economic gain and the happiness of one's wife, over the kinship morality which should bind brothers together. In recognition of this tragic inevitability, brothers sometimes decide upon a partition before their relations become very strained. Three of the 42 cases of partition in fraternal-extended households, and one of the seven inter-generation partitions described above, were amicable settlements of this kind. Partition partly removes the sources of exacerbation between brothers, and usually restores to some extent peaceful relations between them, their wives and adult children. But it also usually separates them forever into groups, and the bitterness generated during and just before the partition never completely disappears. 'Human relations are like a jar of pickles', said Sarwanand ; 'once the rot sets in, it can never be eradicated, no matter how much you are willing to throw out of the jar.' Partition is thus a crucial event in the developmental cycle of the Pandit household, and the last episode in the history of a *chulah* as that particular *chulah*.

Partition enables emerging sub-groups within a household to realize ambitions incompatible with the continued membership of a single household. After partition the members of the emergent households deal with one another far more on a group-to-group basis than on a person-to-person basis. The bonds that bind together the households of brothers and patrilineally related cousins is that of agnatic kinship and territorial proximity. In the absence of the latter agnation stands out as the surviving link. The emphasis upon agnation, already prominent in intra-household relations, becomes very pronounced in inter-household relations. We will now proceed to a consideration of the inter-household grouping called the *kotamb* (family), and the wider category of agnatic kin known as the *kol* (lineage).

9

The Family and the Patrilineage

I

The Family

In the five preceding chapters I have focussed attention on the *chulah* which is the smallest unit within the Pandit kinship system. If some readers have got the impression that the household is here sought to be portrayed as a self-sufficient group, or that my account of it is intended to exhaust the Pandit kinship system, it is time to correct the misconception. The hitherto exclusive preoccupation with the *chulah* has been a deliberate heuristic device to bring out clearly the functional significance of the household in the domestic life of the Pandits. Having discussed at quite some length the 'internal order' of the household, I now turn to an examination of its 'external order', i.e. the interrelations between households constituting a wider grouping.

A Pandit household does not commonly live in isolation in a village. In most cases its natal members have patrilineal kin living with them in the same village, albeit in another or other households. All such agnatically related households taken together constitute a *kotamb* (derived from the Sanskrit *kutumba,* meaning 'family' or 'household'). The Hindi term *parivar* (family) also is used but relatively rarely.

In casual conversation the Pandits sometimes use the terms *chulah* and *kotamb* interchangeably, but when clarification is sought, they explain that the *kotamb* is larger than a small group of (primary) kin, and usually consists of a grouping of *chulahs*. For the sake of clarity I have consistently avoided the use of the word *kotamb* in connexion with the *chulah*. Another, more important, reason has been that, a Pandit's devotion to his own household notwithstanding, his conception of the *kotamb* is in terms of a large extended family consisting of

several *chulahs*. The sociologist will undoubtedly point out the importance of the nuclear family in Pandit domestic life, and the Pandits will agree. But when they call a *chulah* also a *kotamb*, it is almost invariably because it happens to be an *extended* family.[1]

A *kotamb* is an on-going concern, as it were. A new *chulah* is added to it whenever a constituent household breaks up into two. In the rare event of a *chulah's* extinction the *kotamb* suffers depletion. When a household migrates, only the local integrality of the *kotamb* is affected. That is to say, the *kotamb* is usually unilocal but in certain cases it may be dispersed over two or more villages.

The Compound and the Neighbourhood

At the time it occurs, partition seldom entails the complete separation of the resultant groups, which commonly stay together in the same house of which they have divided use. At a later stage, one or more of the *chulahs* may move out into a new house. After partition has taken place, two (or more) brothers may not only continue to own their dwelling-house in common, but also such property as is impartible, over the apportionment of which there has been disagreement, and/or the joint ownership of which is economically advantageous. Thus, the *chulahs* of brothers living in the same house usually own the outbuildings, the yard and the kitchen-garden jointly. Whereas they have divided use of the cattleshed and the garden, none of them is given the exclusive use of any part of the granary or the yard. The *chulahs* that result from a partition thus constitute, in these respects, an estate-owning group. Their separate shares of the common estate while clearly defined may vary in proportion.

Partitions occur generation after generation, and with the gradual rise in the number of households of closely related agnatic kinsmen, new houses are built near the ancestral house, around the same yard or in adjacent yards. Such clusters of houses (ranging in Utrassu-Umanagri from two to four in

[1] Cf. '*Kutumb* . . . is a word used to denote the family, and is as flexible as its English translation. Thus, one can call the elementary or extended family *kutumb*, in the English sense of a noble family' (Mayer 1960, p. 167).

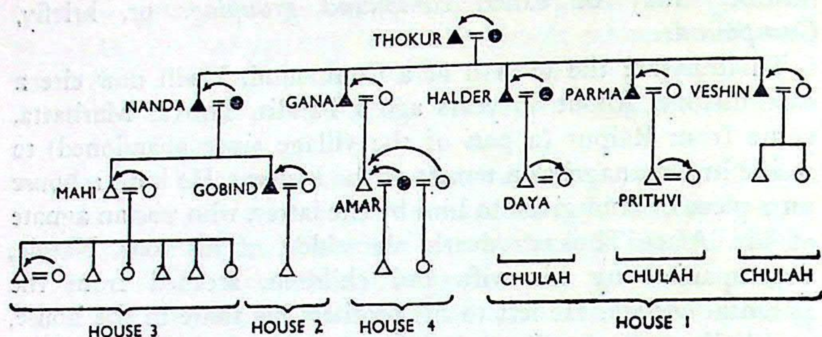
number) may be called *compound groupings* or, briefly, *Compounds.*

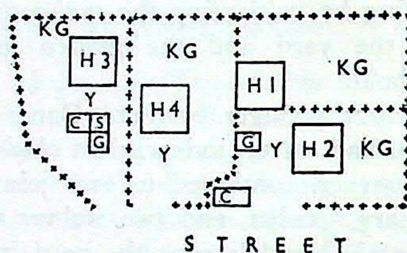
To illustrate the growth of a Compound, I will now cite a case history. About 80 years ago a Pandit, Thokar Marhatta, came from Raipur (a *pati* of the village since abandoned) to reside in Umanagri as a tenant of the *mahant.* He built a house on a piece of land given to him by the latter, who was an agnate of his. After Thokar's death, the eldest of his sons, Nanda, accompanied by his wife and children, seceded from the parental *chulah.* He left to his brothers his share in the house, and built a new dwelling adjoining the older one. Neither of the two *chulahs* owned any land of its own and all five brothers earned their living by cultivating the *mahant's* land. Nanda's *chulah* owned the yard and the garden jointly with his brothers' household.

By 1936 the four younger brothers, Gana, Haldar, Parma and Veshin, also had set up independent *chulahs* in the older house. They, however, continued to own jointly their house, cattleshed, granary, garden, and two walnut trees. They also owned jointly with Nanda's sons the yard in front of their houses. Nanda himself was already dead, and his son, Mahi, had married. Later Mahi's younger brother, Gobind, and Gana's son, Amar, married. Still later Haldar's only son, Daya, also married but patriuxorilocally.

By 1942 Gana and Haldar were dead, and Nanda's sons, Mahi and Gobind, had partitioned their *chulah.* They, however, continued to own jointly their house, some land they had purchased, and a walnut tree Nanda had planted. In that year Mahi built a house on an adjacent piece of land purchasing half of it from his brother, Gobind, in exchange for his (Mahi's) share in their father's house. This third house and the land on which it was built thus became Mahi's exclusive property, and he fenced it off from all sides.

By 1956 Parma and Veshin were dead, and Parma's son Prithvi had married patriuxorilocally. In that year Gana's son Amar built a house, adjoining the first house in which he had been coresiding with the two *chulahs* of his widowed aunts. Early in 1957 Amar put a fence across the yard, separating that part of it which lay in front of his house, for the ostensible





C: cattle shed
G: granary
KG: kitchen garden
S: shop
Y: Yard
H1, 2, 3, 4: houses
+ + + + + +: fences.

Fig. XIII

reason that stray cattle caused damage to his garden. His action was resented by the other *chulahs* living in the yard, and although they appealed to an elderly villager (who is an agnate of the heads of these households) for intervention, they finally acquiesced in the partition of the yard.

Where there was originally (about 1880) the single *chulah* and house of Thokar, there is now a Compound of three adjacent yards, consisting of four houses and five *chulahs* of patrilineal kinsmen. The Compound as a whole owns nothing in common. But Mahi owns some land and walnut trees jointly with Gobind's widow and son ; Amar owns jointly with Prithvi and Veshin's widow and children the first house, and the cattleshed, the granary and the walnut trees attached to it. Prithvi and Veshin's widow and children own the yard jointly with Gobind's widow and son. Daya's position is rather indeterminate. He continues to live with his wife's natal *chulah,* his wife having inherited considerable property from her father, and visits his natal village very rarely. But Prithvi and his wife come to visit his mother quite frequently. Unlike Daya, he has thus kept alive his interest in his estate. But the former has not abandoned or sold off his share in his ancestral property. His rooms in the first house (at Umanagri) are not in use, but his cousins cultivate his part of the garden.

The foregoing account of the growth and composition of a Compound is typical, but the regularities it illustrates must be qualified if they are to be more widely applied. In rare cases a Compound consists of two or three groupings of unrelated patrilineal kinsmen. This usually happens when a female agnate is married patriuxorilocally, and her husband does not return to his natal home with his family of procreation after the death of his parents-in-law. Very rarely the houses of unrelated *chulahs* may be built in contiguous yards and constitute a Compound. On the other hand, a household may build a new home some distance away from its ancestral house. This is done out of necessity because of the lack of building space adjoining the ancestral house, or voluntarily in order to achieve privacy and freedom from interference. The new homestead may be separated from the older one(s) by a pathway, garden, brook or stretch of land, but may be close enough to constitute along

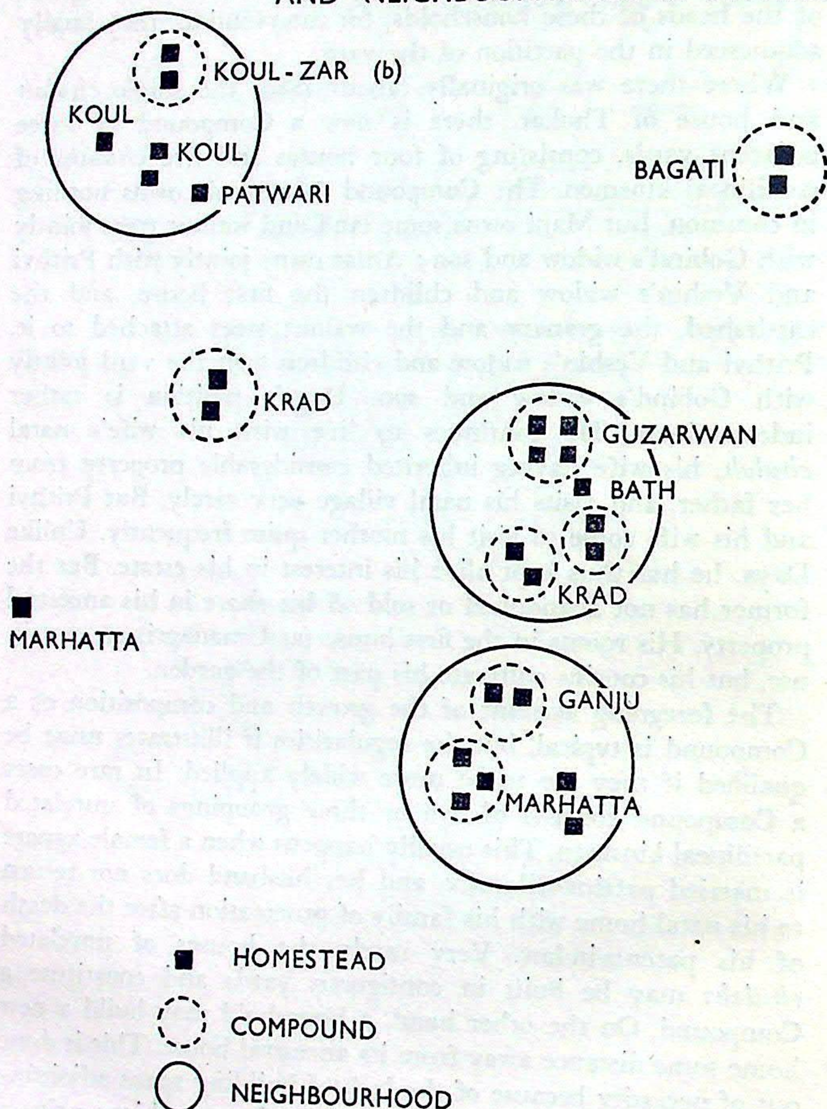

PANDIT HOMESTEADS, COMPOUNDS
AND NEIGHBOURHOODS IN UTRASSU
KOUL - ZAR (b)
KOUL
KOUL
PATWARI
BAGATI
KRAD
GUZARWAN
BATH
KRAD
MARHATTA
GANJU
MARHATTA
HOMESTEAD
COMPOUND
NEIGHBOURHOOD

Fig. XIV(a)

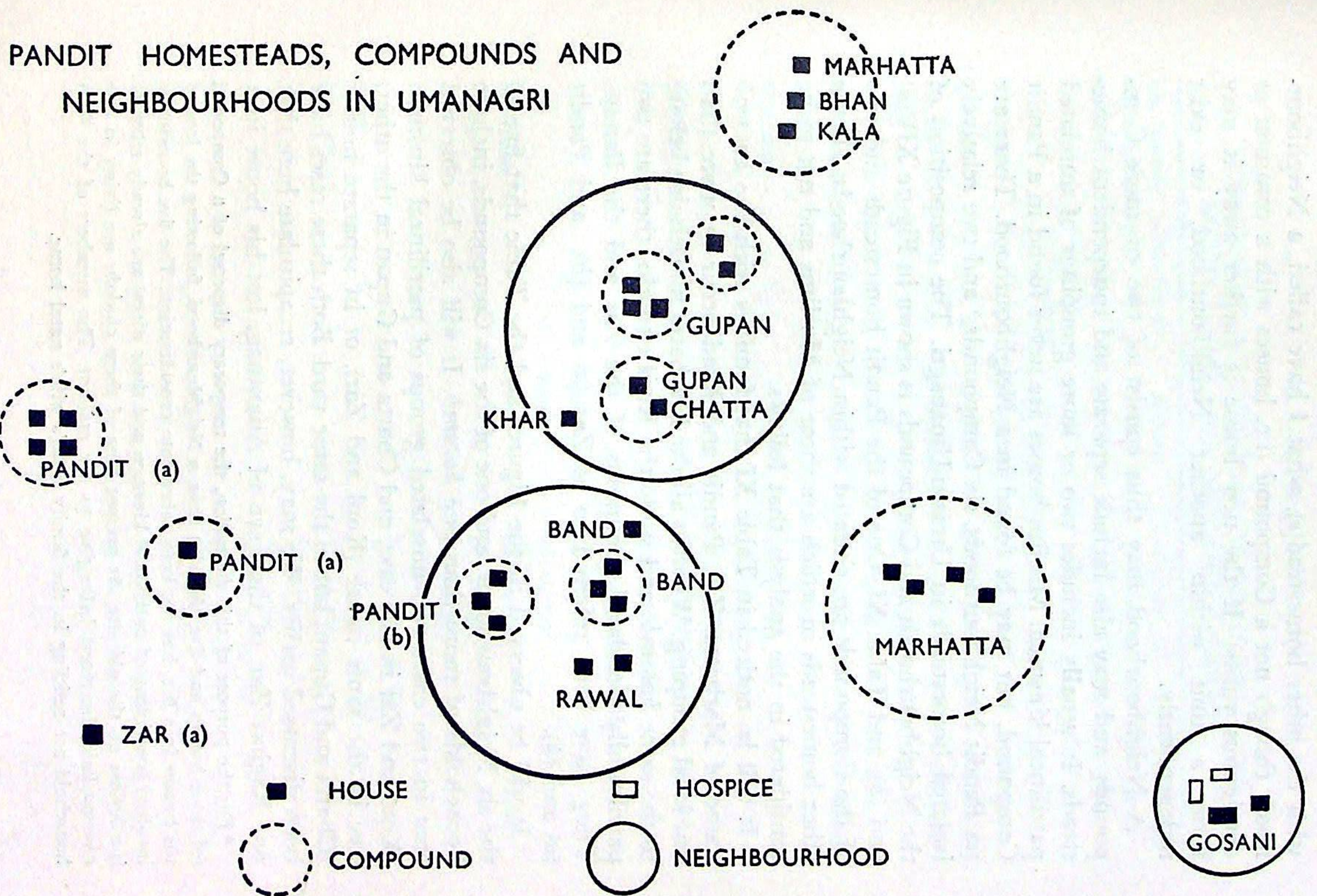

PANDIT HOMESTEADS, COMPOUNDS AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS IN UMANAGRI
MARHATTA
BHAN
KALA
GUPAN
GUPAN
CHATTA
KHAR
PANDIT (a)
PANDIT (a)
BAND
BAND
PANDIT
(b)
RAWAL
MARHATTA
ZAR (a)
GOSANI
HOUSE
HOSPICE
COMPOUND
NEIGHBOURHOOD

Fig. XIV(b)

with the other homestead(s), what I have called, a Neighbourhood, though not a Compound (i.e. houses with a common or contiguous yards). If the new house is further away it may form a unit within another Neighbourhood, or exist independently.

A Neighbourhood may thus consist of two or more Compounds, and may also include separate and independent homesteads. It usually includes two or more groupings of unrelated patrilineal kinsmen. Muslim houses are never found in a Pandit Compound, but may be found in a Neighbourhood. There are six Pandit Neighbourhoods, six Compounds,[2] and two relatively isolated homesteads in Utrassu-Umanagri. The composition of the Neighbourhoods and Compounds is shown in Figure XIV(*a*) and (*b*), and Table XI. One of the Pandit homesteads and two of the Compounds are situated within Neighbourhoods, all the other homesteads in which are those of Muslims and not to be considered in the analysis that follows.

It will be noticed in Table XI that families with the *kotamb* name of Marhatta, Zar, Pandit and Krad occur in more than one local grouping. Whereas all the Marhatta households belong to the same *kotamb*, and so do the Krad *chulahs*, there are two patrilineally unrelated groupings of the Zar and the Pandit. They have been referred to as Zar (*a*) and (*b*), and Pandit (*a*) and (*b*).

It will be observed in the Figures and the Table that five of the six Neighbourhoods, and one of the six Compounds, include households of more than one *kotamb*. It will also be observed that in two cases two unrelated groups of patrilineal kinsmen (Koul and Zar in one case, and Chatta and Gupan in the other) live in the same house (Koul and Zar), or in separate houses (Chatta and Gupan) but in the same yard. Both these cases have been discussed earlier. We may, however, recapitulate here that one Raghav Zar, of the town of Anantnag, lost his house in a

[2] For the purpose of this discussion, the temporary dispersal of a Compound (of three houses and five *chulahs*) from a Neighbourhood, following the loss of the houses in a fire, has not been taken into consideration. The five households involved (consisting of patrilineal kinsmen and their wives) are already rebuilding houses on the old site. At present four of these *chulahs* are living in two *dharmashala* (hospices) belonging to the *mahant*. The members of the fifth household are residing in the family head's wife's natal home.

TABLE XI

TERRITORIAL GROUPINGS OF CHULAHS INTO COMPOUNDS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

The kotamb name of the chulah(s)	*Number of patrilineages represented in the grouping*	*Nature of grouping*	*Chulahs (C) and houses (H) per yard*	*Location (pati)*
Marhatta	1	Homestead	1C in 1H	Utrassu
Zar (a)	1	„	2C in IH	Umanagri
Bagati	1	Compound	3C in 2H	Utrassu
Krad	1	„	2C in 1H; 1C in 1H	„
Pandit (a)	1	„	2C in 2H	Umanagri
Pandit (a)	1	„	7C in 4H	„
Marhatta	1	„	3C in 2H; 1C in 1H; 1C in 1H;	„
Bhan Kala Marhatta	3	„	Bhan: 1C in 1H Kala· 1C in 1H Marhatta: 2C in 1H	„
Gosani	1	Neighbourhood	3C in 1H; 1C in 1H	„
Marhatta Ganju	2	„	Marhatta: 4C in 3H; 1C in 1H; 1C in 1H Ganju: 2C in 2H	Utrassu
Krad Guzarwan Bath	3	„	Krad: 2C in 2H; 4C in 2H Guzarwan: 4C in 4H Bath: 1C in 1H	„
Koul Zar (b) Patwari	3	„	Koul: 2C in 1H; 1C in 1H; 1C in 1H Koul-Zar: 1 Koul C in 1H; I Koul C & 1 Zar C in IH Patwari:. 1C in IH	Utrassu

TABLE XI—(*Contd.*)

TERRITORIAL GROUPINGS OF CHULAHS INTO COMPOUNDS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

The kotamb name of the chulah(s)	*Number of patrilineages represented in the grouping*	*Nature of grouping*	*Chulahs (C) and houses (H) per yard*	*Location (pati)*
Band Rawal Pandit (b)	3	Neighbourhood	Band: 1C in 1H; 4C in 3H; Rawal: 1C in 1H; 2C in 1H Pandit: 5C in 3H	Umanagri
Chatta Gupan Khar	3	„	Chatta-Gupan: 2 Chatta C in 1H and 1 Gupan C in 1H Gupan: 7C in 3H; 4C in 2H Khar: 2C in 1H	„
Totals	20	2 homesteads 6 compounds 6 neighbourhoods	87 *chulahs*[a] 60 houses	

fire some 20 years ago, and came to Utrassu, with his wife and children, to live in the house of his father-in-law, Mak Koul. Both Mak and Raghav are now dead, and Raghav's widow and sons are living in the same house as Mak's brother's *chulah*, though as a separate household. Mak had no sons and his widow died in 1958. In the other case a man of the Chatta family, who has migrated out of the village, sold his house to an unrelated co-villager in 1957. Consequently the latter's *chulah* and the former's cousins' two *chulahs* are living in two houses in the same yard.

[a] There are only 59 Pandit houses in the village. The discrepancy in the number of houses is due to the fact that three houses gutted by fire in 1947 have been included in this table and two hospices, at present temporarily in use as dwelling houses, have been excluded from it.

As shown in Figure XIV (*a*) and (*b*) and Table XI, several related *chulahs* with the *kotamb* names Marhatta, Pandit(*a*) and Krad are scattered in two or more Compounds or Neighbourhoods. There are 14 Marhatta households in the village; six of these form a Neighbourhood in Utrassu, and one lives in a homestead in the same *pati*. Another five constitute a Compound in Umanagri; and two more live in another Compound in the same *pati*. The Pandit(*a*) of Umanagri live in two separate Compounds, and the Krad of Utrassu in a Neighbourhood and a Compound.

Finally, it will be noted that one *kotamb* of two *chulahs* of first cousins lives in a homestead and each of the remaining 11 *kotamb* (out of 15) lives in a Compound or a Neighbourhood. The Pandits refer to these local groupings as *tola, pather, mahala,* or *pur* (see above, p. 36). All the terms refer to the fact of aggregation and denote local groupings of varying size.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis we may conclude that in Utrassu-Umanagri:

(*i*) Compounds in all but one case (that of the Marhatta, the Bhan and the Kala houses) consist of the *chulahs* of patrilineally related kinsmen;

(*ii*) Neighbourhoods in all but one case (that of the Gosani Neighbourhood) consist of two to three unrelated *kotamb*; and

(*iii*) The *kotamb* exists in all but three cases (those of the Pandit(*a*), the Marhatta and the Krad) as a Compound or Neighbourhood within the village.

In other words, the *kotamb* as a local grouping is derived from the Pandit descent system. But before taking up consideration of the latter, I will discuss the dispersal of *kotamb*.

Dispersed 'Kotamb'

We may now turn attention to what happens when a family is dispersed in (*a*) more than one locality in the same village (three cases in Utrassu-Umanagri), or (*b*) two or more villages. In the former case a *chulah* takes up residence in a new locality by choice or by necessity. But if the related households live in nearby localities (as in the case of the Krad and the Pandit(*a*)),

a drastic change in their interrelations usually does not take place, although constant face-to-face association is precluded, and consequently the possibilities of co-operation or conflict in daily intercourse are considerably diminished. But if the groupings are widely scattered in the village (as in the case of the Marhatta), the resultant dimunition in interaction is pronounced. During 1957 there was no casual visiting between the Marhatta of Utrassu and Umanagri, although all the Marhatta *chulahs* were represented when the mother of Amar Marhatta, a resident of Umanagri, died.

The dispersal of a *kotamb* in two or more villages may be the result of patriuxorilocal marriage or migration ; in the former case it is often only temporary. The Pandits are emphatic that a man and his children belong to the same *kotamb* as his brothers and their children, even if the former do not live in the same village as the latter. These separated groups of kin usually have many rights and interests in common and often act together as the members of the same *kotamb*. When Lakhim died her son was not in Kashmir, and she was cremated by her husband's brother's son who lives patriuxorilocally in a nearby village, and came to Utrassu-Umanagri for this purpose.

Brothers, and usually first cousins also, act together as the members of the same extended family whenever a contingency arises even though they are living in different villages. In such cases we may, therefore, speak of the *dispersed* households of an extended family. Six *kotamb* and five *chulahs* of the village have agnatic ties with households in other villages.

The position with regard to second cousins is rather variable, and changes from case to case, depending upon the existing relations in each case. The Pandits are, however, agreed that when an extended family becomes dispersed in two or more villages, the *kotamb* relationship generally ceases after two *ter* (degrees of collaterality) intervene between kinsmen. In sociological terms we could say that relations of command of one person over another, and joint property rights and obligations, are confined within the limits of second degree cousinship. This is, in fact, the case as I was not able to record any instances of joint rights and obligations, or of co-operative group

behaviour, between the households of third cousins who are resident in different villages.

Two related questions arise here: first, are there any similar genealogically defined limits on co-operation between the households constituting a *kotamb* within a village? and, second, what happens to the ties of kinship when the *kotamb* withers away?

In theory, degrees of cousinship are irrelevant in the interrelations between the households of a unilocal extended family; no matter how distantly related, the *chulahs* of agnatically related kin residing in a single village constitute one single *kotamb*. The second question—what happens to the ties of kinship when the *kotamb* withers away?—does not, therefore, arise.

In practice, however, a gradual weakening of coactivity is noticeable. Thus, there are no instances of joint ownership in the village between the *chulahs* of third cousins. Sustained co-operation and conflict continue, but remain confined to the trivialities of daily routine until an occasion of importance—birth, initiation, marriage or death—arises.

The conclusion that we must draw is that when the patrilineage, which constitutes the core of a *kotamb*, has a wide span, vicinage acquires decisive importance in maintaining the *kotamb* in existence. In other words, the fact that kin live together overrides to some extent the significance of how they are related. When bonds of agnation become weak in themselves, the bonds of vicinage strengthen them by creating common interests and opportunities for coactivity (co-operation as well as conflict).

But what happens when the dispersal of households into different villages leads to the withering away of the *kotamb* relationship between some of them? The bonds of patrilineal descent survive such a cessation of regular interaction within the framework of domestic kinship; the household, torn apart from its matrix—the extended family—, still remains linked to the patrilineage (*kol*); but more about that later.

Inter-Household relations within the 'Kotamb'

The *kotamb*, as we have shown, grows out of the *chulah* and is structurally, and also functionally, comparable to it. It is a

segmentary grouping created by a partition or a series of partitions. However, partition does not sever all ties between the family of a man and his natal household. In terms of economic assets and interests, jural position and domestic organization, partition involves a fundamental division of rights of ownership and other interests, as also a change of status. Nevertheless, the partitive households continue to have common interests arising from the common ownership or use of such property as is not parcelled out at the time of partition. There are six *kotamb* (out of 15) in Utrassu-Umanagri which jointly own some property. In four out of these six cases, there are only two *chulahs* in the *kotamb,* in one there are three, and in another, four. The *chulah* heads are related either as brothers, or first or second cousins. Common property consists of the homestead (house, granary and yard) and walnut trees in three cases, and the yard and walnut trees in the three other cases. In the remaining nine *kotamb,* although the family as a whole does not own any property in common, segments within it do. These property-owning segments include in all cases the households of brothers, and also in some cases of first and second cousins. No cases of joint ownership between the *chulahs* of more distant cousins were recorded in the village. All natal members of a segment, or of the whole *kotamb,* if it consists of brothers and their households only, have a joint contingent interest in each other's property. Should any one of them die without a lineal heir, his estate will be divided among the others on the *per stirpes* basis.

During the early phases in the growth of a *kotamb,* partition between the *chulahs* of brothers, or first (even second) cousins may involve the whole *kotamb;* but after its collateral spread has extended further, such partitions affect only a certain segment of it. Full partitions are usually not achieved between the households of brothers; they are made complete through 'residual partitions' between the *chulahs* of cousins. Assets may be divided, exchanged, or interests in them reconciled in some other way. Nila, who bought a new house in the village in 1957, sold his portion of the ancestral house to his two brothers and first cousin, who reallocated rooms in it between themselves. Raghu and Kashi, second cousins, cut down the old walnut tree they owned jointly, and divided the

sale proceeds. Maha agreed to surrender his claim to a share in a plot of land in favour of his father's first cousin who has built a house on it, in exchange for the latter's kitchen garden. Veshi abandoned his ownership of half of his ancestral home, in favour of his father's brother, in exchange for the exclusive ownership of a nearby plot of land on which he built his own house. Daya owns jointly, with the *chulahs* of his first cousins, a house, a cattleshed and a garden. He is living partriuxorilocally in another village, and although he retains possession of three rooms in the house, he has permitted his cousins' households to use his portion of the garden and the cattleshed. If he does not return to his natal village, as seems to be very likely, his sons may be expected to abandon any claim to the cattleshed and the garden (rights of ownership in which will then be vested in the male members of the other households on the basis of descent), if not also to the rooms in the house.

There are also other bonds which unite the *chulahs* of brothers closely even after partition. Prominent among these are common, identically related kin (such as sisters, mother's natal family, and father's siblings), and joint or identical responsibilities and obligations towards them. Moreover, there are ritual or ceremonial occasions (like births, deaths, birthdays, death anniversaries and marriages) which bring them together. Thus, the households of brothers are expected to contribute equally towards the periodical gifts to be sent to their married sister and her parents-in-law if she was married before the partition. As has been stated earlier, if there is an unmarried sister in a *chulah* at the time of partition, the brother with whom she stays receives an additional share on her behalf, and all responsibility for her marriage expenses and later gifts rests with him, although the other brother (or brothers) may willingly contribute towards these expenses.

The position of a widow is different. Usually she receives no share at the time of partition, but she may, if she explicitly asks for it, receive a maintenance share. But when she dies all her sons are expected to contribute to her cremation expenses, particularly the eldest son, who cremates her. This may not, however, happen in all cases. When Sondar died she was living with

her own son, Dama, who was living separately from his elder step-brother. Dama cremated his mother and bore all the expenses. The position is different in the case of the full brothers Lambu and Veshi who are living separately in the village. When their old mother, who is at present living with Veshi, dies, it will be Lambu who will cremate her, being her first-born son. Both the brothers will contribute towards the funeral expenses, Lambu more than Veshi, because it will be the former, as the elder son, who will be in charge of the rites. But when their youngest brother Sham, also living with Veshi, is married, Lambu will not be expected to contribute towards the marriage, as Veshi and Sham both retained their shares when Lambu seceded from the *chulah*. Besides, partition between brothers rarely affects their relations with more distant common kin, like their maternal and paternal cousins, because of the absence of common interests.

As for ritual and ceremonial occasions: Maha and Vasa, two step-brothers (sons of the same father), are living in two different houses, Maha in his wife's natal home and Vasa in the *mahant's* hospice. On the yearly death anniversary of their father, Maha, the elder brother, goes to Vasa's house to perform the *shraddha*, although the two brothers are not on very good terms with one another. It is customarily the elder brother only who performs the *shraddha*. (Incidentally, the incompatibility between the ties of patrilineal descent and affinity are well illustrated in this case. The Pandits say that when a man is performing *shraddha*, none of his wife's natal kin should be present. It is because of this that Maha goes to Vasa's house to offer the *pinda* to his manes.) Similarly, Maha is invited by Vasa on his birthday to a meal, and the latter does not refuse the invitation as doing so would amount to wishing ill to Vasa. When Maha's daughter was married (in 1956) Vasa, his wife and younger brother shouldered more responsibility for management of the ceremonies than any cousin of Maha's. They also presented a gold necklace to the bride as a gift.

To take another example, Dina and Arjan, two brothers, live in the same house but as the heads of two households. Dina is the elder of the two men, and it is in his kitchen that the

indivisible sacred pots of the house[3] are kept, although Arjan's wife also puts boiled rice in them occasionally. It is again Dina who performs the yearly domestic ritual in honour of god Shiva to which the Pandits attach great importance (see Madan 1961b). Only one household in a house performs this ritual. Arjan and Dina share the expenses and all the members of the two households partake of the ritual meal together.

Besides the ties mentioned above, the sibling bond between brothers holds them closer together than cousins. We have already pointed out how Maha depended more upon the help of his step-brothers, than that of his uncles and cousins, at the time of his daughter's marriage. Thus partition does not involve complete severence of ties ; it is partly a satisfactory reorganization of relations. In inter-kin relations, the most significant change is the general replacement of person-to-person relations by group-to-group relations between the *chulahs* on all formal occasions.[4]

The process of the gradual loosening of bonds, privileges and obligations between the households of patrilineal kinsmen, as generation after generation separates them from their common ancestor, is also expressed in the daily and periodical interaction that takes place between them. Let us now examine the form and content of this interaction.

The households constituting a *kotamb* are bound together by the fact that they are patrilineally interrelated, through their natal members, and that they are usually unilocal (living in one village and often as one Compound or Neighbourhood). The former is the fundamental bond, and vicinage goes with it.

The bonds of patrilineal kinship are associated with various

[3] In each Pandit house are lodged two small sanctified pots ; they are kept in the kitchen. After food has been cooked, but before it is served to any member of the house, some cooked rice is put in these pots. They are emptied the next morning and the rice is thrown out to birds. The process is repeated every morning. The two pots symbolize protective deities (see Madan 1959, p. 88).

[4] The change-over from person-to-person relations within the family to relations on a group-to-group basis in the context of the wider kinship organization is a widespread phenomenon. To give but two examples, it was noticed among the Australian aborigines by Malinowski (1913, p. 303) and among the Nuer by Evans-Pritchard (1951, pp. 4f.).

obligations. The most important of these is *kol* exogamy (see above, p. 106). Again, birth and death within the *kotamb* cause pollution to all its ritually initiated members. Although, strictly speaking, pollution does not last equally long for those persons who are related within the limits of second degree cousinship to the man who has died, or whose wife has borne him a child, and those who are outside these limits, all the ritually initiated members in a *kotamb* usually regard themselves as being polluted for the maximum period applicable in a case of pollution.[5] More significant is the manner in which formal mourning, following the death of an adult, is observed. Unlike pollution, formal mourning is voluntary. It involves abstention from bathing, shaving, and changing clothes, as also from non-vegetarian and stale food for three to ten days. Close kin of the deceased also usually give up *koj* (the midday meal). If a man's cousins are not living in the same village with him, they may not observe any formal mourning for him on his death, particularly if he is more distant than a first cousin. But within the *kotamb*, mourning for at least three days is usually regarded as obligatory, and may be observed for seven or ten days. In observing it a person is not necessarily influenced by grief, kinship sentiment, or any notion of moral duty. Formal mourning for a close relative is a social expectation among the Pandits, and may be observed for the sake of social approval, or out of the fear of social disapproval. When Lakhim died, her husband's brother's sons' *chulahs* observed only three days' formal mourning. There was some adverse comment in the village on their having been in an unseemly hurry to come out of mourning. Through observing formal mourning, the households in a *kotamb* express solidarity with each other. At the same time differentiation between close and remote kin is also recognized by observing a longer or shorter period of mourning.

Similarly, during the ceremonies associated with birth, death and marriage, solidarity and differentiation between households

[5] Within the limits of second degree cousinship (inclusive), a boy's or a girl's birth causes pollution for ten days. The death of a toothless infant or of a married female agnate causes no pollution. The period of pollution in other cases of death is: uninitiated boy or unmarried female agnate, five days; married male agnate, ten days; and the wife of a male agnate, ten days.

in a *kotamb* come into prominence in inter-*chulah* relations. The members of the households of brothers, constituting the segment of the lowest order of differentiation, help one another and co-operate on such occasions much more than the segments with wider spans; and there is greater co-operation between the households of first, than of second, cousins, and so on. Thus the wives of close male agnates help each other in the non-Sanskritic ceremonies that are performed during the eleven days after a child's birth. They also look after the comfort of the baby and the mother, and help in the kitchen. The wives of remoter agnates will often come only to offer congratulations and partake of 'the eleventh day feast'.

At marriages and deaths, the closer agnates in the *kotamb*, and their spouses, provide much needed help in domestic and other work specific to these occasions, like cooking, distribution of food, entertaining of guests, ceremonial singing, and the performance of rituals. All the costs are borne by the *chulah* in which the event (birth, marriage or death) occurs. However, close agnates of the head of the household concerned, like his brothers and uncles, may make presents as a contribution towards the marriage-portion and dowry of a female agnate on her marriage. The family head's married sisters, daughters and aunts (father's sisters) usually return to their natal home on these occasions and so do closely related males who have been married patriuxorilocally, or who are away from home on work. When Lakhim died, it was her husband's two younger brothers' widows and children who figured more prominently in all activities, ranging from cremation to cooking and washing, for ten days after her death. They also observed ten days' mourning for her. But the two households of her husband's elder brother's sons observed only three days' mourning for her, and did not work in her son's house as his other close relatives did. Lakhim's son was not in Kashmir when she died, and she was cremated by her husband's brother's son. Agnation is emphasized by making it the duty of any male agnate of a deceased man, or of a deceased woman's husband, to cremate him or her. But a son is preferred to a brother (or husband's brother), and he to a cousin or nephew. Bishambarnath graphically put it to me thus: 'A man may cremate all his male agnates and their

wives, and carry them to the land of manes as does the omnibus that carries the villagers to town. But having a son of one's own is like having a horse for exclusive use!'

A man who cremates an uncle or an aunt may receive a share from the deceased man's estate, if the only lineal heir to the estate is a patriuxorilocally married daughter. If a man dies without any lineal heir, his estate is inherited in the first instance by his collateral agnates of the same segment of the *kotamb* on the *per stirpes* basis.

We have already pointed out that there is usually more than one *kotamb* in a Neighbourhood. The daily interrelations between the households of related or unrelated patrilineal kinsmen in a Neighbourhood have wide scope. They range from working together on identical tasks in the yard, in the case of a Compound, to informal mutual visiting, lending and borrowing of articles of domestic use, and helping each other in various kinds of domestic work in the case of a Compound or a Neighbourhood. Although, on a superficial view, there may seem to be no differentiation between kin and non-kin in these daily activities, closer study reveals that such a differentiation exists. Thus, the members of a household may not ask unrelated *chulahs* for help without offending the related households ; and a *chulah* does not find it easy to refuse a request for help if it comes from a neighbouring household of related patrilineal kinsmen. It would be a far more serious thing to do than to refuse help to an unrelated *chulah*. Moreover, the related households in a Neighbourhood have many joint interests and rights which they do not share with the unrelated *chulahs*. Thus, they, or some of them, may own the messuage or part of it in common. Any event of importance in any one of the households like a birth, initiation, marriage or death has significance and is of interest for only the related *chulahs*.

All agnatically related households in a Compound or a Neighbourhood do not, however, usually engage in any economic, religious (pertaining to gods and not manes or members of the *kotamb*), or political activity together as a group. Economic and religious activities (of this kind) are among the Pandits usually associated with the household. So far as political activities (such as voting in *panchayat* elections) are concerned,

they may be influenced by considerations of kinship, but kin groups do not make any political decisions, nor do they engage in any joint political activity. Thus, whereas the unilocal *kotamb* functions as a whole in certain periodical situations and contingencies, segments within a *kotamb* emerge as units of action more often.

Hostility between Cousins

In a *kotamb* with a wide span a *chulah* head has more cousins than brothers. The *kotamb* is sometimes referred to by Pandits as the 'group of cousins (*piter tola*)'. In the *chulah* individual behaviour is guided by mutual affection and is influenced by a strongly developed ethic which exalts self-sacrifice, filial duty and fraternal amity. We have also shown that when a household, in the course of its development, enters the phase of a fraternal-extended family, an incompatibility develops between the brothers' individual self-interest on the one hand, and their mutual affection and loyalty on the other. Sibling rivalry in the household generally leads to partition. After partition the supremacy of self-interest is openly recognized, and the *chulahs* of brothers deal with each other in terms of it and on a reciprocal basis. The *chulahs* in a *kotamb* are always watching each others' behaviour. Every act of kindness, help or hostility is noted and returned when opportunity arises. There is both co-operation as well as conflict between them, one alternating with the other. Consequently, an increasing differentiation in their mutual relations results from cumulative interaction between them. Conflict between the *chulahs* of cousins is a prominent feature of Pandit kinship. The sibling rivalry which leads to partition of the household is later revealed in a more intense form in the relations between cousins. Although brothers may have their conflicts they also have many joint interests, rights and obligations. They feel more strongly the compulsiveness of the ethic of fraternal amity. Above all, their close relationship as siblings is an immutable bond.

Between cousins, joint interests become diffuse as the genealogical connexion becomes remoter. They feel freer to quarrel and are not greatly restrained by the morality of kinship

solidarity. Conflict between the households of cousins has no serious consequences in terms of the *kotamb* as a whole. It may lead to the achievement of complete partition, and a household may gain residential and economic independence, but these happenings are only a continuation of the process of fission initiated in the *chulah*. The relations between the households of cousins usually become strained by situations which are unlikely to arise between brothers because a Pandit is not only more likely to tolerate an injustice or affront from a brother than a cousin or cousin's wife, but also because he is less likely to be so offended by a brother. To take an example: Dina and Sarwa are first paternal cousins, and on very good relations with one another, and so are the other members of the two households. Sarwa and the members of his *chulah* are living in half of the ancestral house in which Dina also has a share, but he has built himself a new house adjoining the old house, and is living in it with his wife and children. That half of the ancestral house which belongs to Dina is in a bad state of repair. The roof is leaking and the floor of the third storey has dropped into the second. He keeps his cows in the room on the ground floor, and does not let Sarwa have possession of the whole house, nor does he repair his rooms in it. Sarwa says he is helpless although he realizes that the whole house may face collapse in a few years' time. Other Pandits discussing the situation with me said that it fell within the bounds of permitted behaviour between cousins, and that Sarwa and Dina were on much better terms than cousins usually are.

Hostility between collaterally related agnates may not be expressed through acts of commission only but also through acts of omission. Deva is a poor widow's only son and is studying at the village school. He raised money to pay his fees in 1956 by requesting for donations from several villagers. Deva's father's brother who is a prosperous man did not offer to pay the boy's fees. The persons who had given money to Deva expressed condemnation of his uncle's behaviour but also assured me that the latter's behaviour was not very unusual.

The relationship between paternal cousins is called *piteruth* by the Pandits. It is derived from the term of reference for father's brother which is *peter*. *Pitur* (masculine) and *piter*

(feminine) are also derived from *peter* and mean collateral agnates. Since the relations between cousins, uncles and nephews are regarded by the Pandits to be traditionally characterized by mutual hostility, *piteruth* has come to mean cousinly hostility, or more generally unmotivated hostility. Thus if a person treats another person with undeserved hostility, the latter may object by asking, 'Am I your *pitur*?'

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, we may conclude that the *kotamb* is a segmentary grouping of patrilineal kinsmen and their wives, and may be (*i*) local and property owning, (*ii*) local and non-property owning, and (*iii*) non-local and non-property owning. A local *kotamb* may include even distantly related patrilineal kinsmen, but dispersed *kotambs* are limited to the households of brothers, first cousins, and/or second cousins. In a local *kotamb* with a wide span, vicinage is of importance in so far as it gives rise to joint interests and activity and maintains interaction within the *kotamb*. The *kotamb* is, broadly speaking, a corporate group ; at lower levels of segmentation property is jointly owned between brothers and cousins and they also have common interests and obligations. In its widest span the kinsmen in a *kotamb* share a common family name and constitute the exogamous, pollution-cum-mourning group.

II

The Patrilineage

In the foregoing discussion the *kotamb* was considered as a grouping of households. Being warranted by facts, such a procedure is legitimate. It does not, however, fully reveal the exact significance of patrilineal descent in the Pandit society. Marriage, filiation and vicinage by themselves do not provide the principles for the formation of a *kotamb ;* agnation also is of equal, and in certain respects greater, importance. It is the core of patrilineal kinsmen which provides the *kinship-link* between the constituent households in a *kotamb*. Again, it is the patrilineage which accounts for continuity in family life, as it lasts longer than any individual, household, or segment within

a *kotamb*. The Pandits themselves often see the patrilineage, referred to as *kol* (derived from the Sanskrit *kula,* meaning, *inter alia,* 'lineage') or *khandan* (Persian) by them, as an attribute of the *kotamb* ; thus a family of distinguished ancestry is usually referred to as being *khandani* or *kolin* (of noble lineage).

The Pandits generally use the word *kol* to designate the most extensive *category* of patrilineal kin. But *kol* ties are invoked with only those agnates who are not included within one's own *chulah* or *kotamb*. Although it is not wrong to say that a man and his sons or brothers are of the same *kol,* yet such a statement would sound not merely superfluous but also absurd to a Pandit. As far as kin more distantly related than as first or second cousins are concerned, they tend to keep the notion of *kol* ties in the background, as it were, so long as they live in the same village—unless, of course a person is keen on stressing the lack of proximity of his kin ties with somebody else. Even an inadvertant slip in observing the correct form of verbal behaviour can cause offence as is illustrated by the following incident.

I was writing down the genealogy of one of the lineages of Utrassu-Umanagri and my informants were Mahi and Shri ; the latter is the former's second cousin once removed (FaFaBr-SoSoSo). Their households are located in the same *pati* but not in the same Neighbourhood. Mahi said that they were of the same *kol,* but Shri took great offence at this demanding to know the names of the manes to whom Mahi offered oblations every morning. Mahi named his father, grandfather and great-grand-father. Shri then asked him further, 'Am I not a descendant of that great-grandfather of yours?' I have chosen this example in preference to others because it represents the sort of situation in which uncertainty prevails. I do not think Mahi would have taken the stand if his second cousin (Shri's father) were alive ; and I doubt if after Mahi's death Shri will object should Mahi's son tell him that the bond between them is of a common *kol* rather than of a common *kotamb*.

The *kol* never emerges in action as an exclusive group, although its members have mutual rights and obligations in all matters which affect the lineage. Some of the members may also own property in common. This happens when a man, who

holds some property jointly with his cousins, migrates or marries patriuxorilocally without disposing of his claims. The instances are few and the property thus owned is in no case of much value.

The morality of agnatic kinship which binds together patrilineal kin is clearly expressed through the observance of birth and death pollution (see above, p. 80), *kol* exogamy (see above, p. 106), and water and food offerings to the manes (see above, pp. 90f.).

The symbolic value of the *shraddha* as a binder of agnatic kinsmen becomes clear when we note that (*i*) it is usually only the eldest brother of a group of siblings who performs this biannual rite, even after they have set up separate households; and (*ii*) a man and his first cousins offer *pinda* to the same ancestors, grandfather upwards; he and his second cousins to the same ancestors, great-grandfather upwards; and so on. At the outside limit, fifth cousins offer *pinda* to their common sixth lineal male ascendant (FaFaFaFaFaFa). The Pandit patrilineage thus has a fixed outer boundary, and is an internally segmented grouping (see Fig. XV). Each segment is called a *land* (branch; plural, *lanji*).

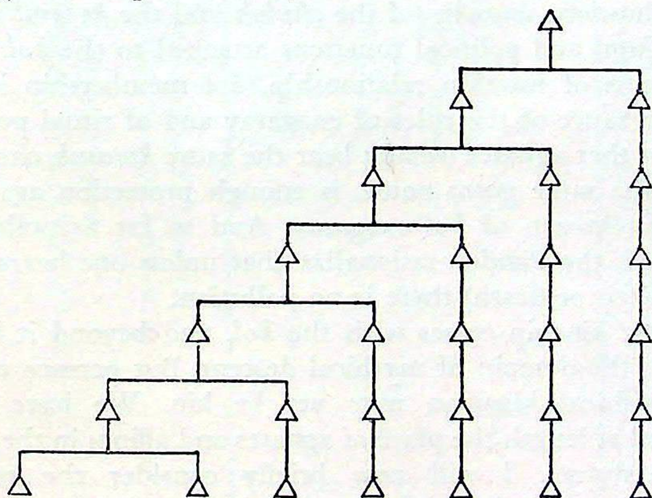


Fig. XV

In this connexion it is of great interest that, as shown in Table XII, none of the Utrassu-Umanagri lineages has a wider

collateral spread than fifth degree cousinship, although the maximum depth of genealogies recorded is eight in two cases and nine in one. In the case of the Umanagri lineages the narrow range is easily explicable in view of the fact that the hamlet is only about 180 years old, but I am unable to explain why the Utrassu lineages also fail to show a wider span. It is, of course, an easy guess that migration and, though to a much lesser extent, patriuxorilocal marriage are two obvious causes. Unfortunately I realized the importance comparative data from other villages would have in this context only after I had left Kashmir.

The Pandits thus recognize *kol* ties with known kin only, and the limits of genealogical knowledge are often within the limits of fifth degree cousinship. They are very indifferent to the preservation of the *kol* genealogy, and freely confess their ignorance of its higher orders. This attitude is understandable ; agnates who are distantly related, and do not live in the same or adjoining villages, find themselves in a situation in which no individual has any positive role to play *vis-à-vis* the others. All common interests exist at lower levels of segmentation, and all important events occur, and decisions about them are made, in the domestic domain (of the *chulah* and the *kotamb*). There are no jural and political functions attached to the *kol*.

In terms of interkin relationship, *kol* membership involves the observance of the rules of exogamy and of ritual pollution. The fact that agnates usually bear the same *kotamb* name, and *always* the same *gotra* name, is enough protection against an unwitting breach of *kol* exogamy. And so far as pollution is concerned, the Pandits rationalize that unless one hears of the event (birth or death) there is no pollution.

Agnatic kinship ceases with the *kol,* and beyond it lies the *gotra,* or the domain of mythical descent. But persons who are not patrilineal kinsmen may yet be kin. We have so far examined at length the place of agnates and affines in the Pandit kinship system. I will now briefly consider the relations between non-agnatic cognates who do not share a common domestic life.

TABLE XII

COLLATERAL SPREAD OF THE PATRILINEAGES LOCALIZED IN UTRASSU-UMANAGRI

The widest collateral spread of agnatic kinship as represented by the relationship between the heads of patrilineally related households.[a]

Degree of cousinship	*First cousins*	*Second cousins*	*Third cousins*	*Fourth cousins*	*Fifth cousins*
Kram	Khar (Um)[b]	Bagati (Ut)	Band (Um)	Koul (Ut)	Gupan (Um)
(*kotamb* name)	Zar (a) (Um)	Ganju (Ut)	Gosani (Um)	Krad (Ut)	
		Chatta (Um)	Guzarwan (Ut)		
		Pandit (b) (Um)	Marhatta (Um & Ut)		
			Pandit (a) (Um)		
			Rawal (Um)		

[a] The Bath, Bhan, Kala, Patwari and Zar (b) families consist of only one household in each case.

[b] (Um) after a *kotamb* name indicates that the family is resident in the *pati* of Umanagri and (Ut) that it is resident in Utrassu,

10

The Wider Kinship Structure : Non-Agnatic Kin

Bilateral Filiation

Radcliffe-Brown has written: 'Since kinship results from the family, and in the family every child has a father and a mother and is therefore connected with both the father's and the mother's family, it would seem to be the normal thing in any human society that social recognition should be given to both paternal and maternal kinship, and this is what we do find universally' (1929, p. 52). But, as Fortes has pointed out, bilateral filiation 'does not imply equality of social weighting for the two sides of kin connexion' (1953, p. 33). This is true of the Pandits. We have so far discussed the Pandit household, the extended family and the patrilineage. But agnation provides only one of the foundations of Pandit kinship; affinity, and cognatic kinship between non-agnatic kin are also of fundamental, though not equal, importance. As was pointed out earlier, marriage is the usual precondition for the continuation of a patrilineage. Although agnation is the ruling principle of the Pandit social organization, the importance of non-agnatic kinship should not be underestimated; along with agnation it is an intrinsic part of the Pandit kinship system.

Marriage brings together two agnatically unrelated *chulahs* (and families). The woman-giving and the woman-receiving families stand to each other in the mutual relationship of *sonya*. A *chulah* also stands in the secondary position of *howur* (or *variw*) to the husband (or wife) of each of its female (or male) natal members. But the members of two households will generally not act in either capacity as *sonya* and as *howur*/*variw* if the woman who binds them in affinity dies without leaving behind any children. On the other hand, when a child is born of a union, the bond between the two families concerned acquires a new dimension. It is assimilated into kinship;

the *sonya-howur chulah* acquires a new function as the *matamal* of the child.[1]

The 'Matamal'

The Pandits use the term *matamal* in three different but closely related senses: (*a*) In its widest sense, it refers to all of ego's matrikin. (*b*) Within this broad category of kin, ego's relations are mostly with the natal *kotamb* of his mother. *Matamal* is thus used to refer to ego's mother's natal family. (*c*) In general usage when a person speaks of his *matamal* he usually means his mother's natal *chulah* as it is with the members of that household that he associates most closely. Among the Pandits, kinship as a field within which social activities take place is a triangular one, as it were, bounded by ego's affines on the one side, his agnates on the second, and his *matamal* and other cognates on the third. The three relationships should ideally never coalesce. The Pandit rules of exogamy, and other preferences in the selection of spouses, are intended to prevent this from happening. Reciprocal marriages, however, upset this balance.

Whether they are born in the natal home of their father or mother, all of a Pandit woman's children belong by descent to her husband's patrilineage. Although in the case of uxorilocal residence they are the coresidential members of their mother's *chulah*, yet they retain their rights by birth in their father's family.

In the case of virilocal residence, the children do not have any right to membership of their mother's natal family. Except in rare cases of patriuxorilocal marriage, the obligation of rearing children, and giving them informal instruction and formal education rests almost exclusively with their agnates. It is only from agnates that a person usually inherits property. From the ritual point of view, the relationship between a Pandit and his patrilineal kinsmen is immutable and uxorilocal residence does not break it. It is only a person's agnates who may perform

[1] Nadel comments thus on the dynamic character of affinal alliances: '. . . in-law relationships in one generation become agnatic and cognatic relationships in the next, and no picture of kinship can be complete without the perspective of successive generations' (1947, p. 12).

various rituals for him. The 'pollution group' is a patronymic grouping of agnates, and the mode of residence does not affect it. Thus, jurally and ritually the ties between a person and his father's natal family (which is also his own natal family) are closer and of greater importance, in terms of interaction, than his ties with his mother's natal family.

But when we consider the social consequences which patri-virilocal residence and patrilineal descent, fortified by ritual notions, usually have in a society, the part which a Pandit's *matamal* plays in his upbringing, and generally in his later life, is indeed considerable. It is customary for a household occasionally to present clothes and toys to the young children of its female agnates, and thus assist in meeting the costs of child rearing, although this is not the motive behind its action. It sends these gifts more out of love than any other reason. If a woman's parents are better off than her parents-in-law, then these gifts are often a welcome relief in times of need. Nevertheless, it is a child's father's natal family which has the main obligation of rearing him, and in fact does so. In some cases children, whose mother or both parents are dead, may be brought up by their *matamal,* though this is very rare if some close agnates of the children are alive. There have been only two such cases in Utrassu-Umanagri in recent times. Prithvi was brought up by his mother's brother in another village after the death of his parents, although he could have lived with his first cousins. In another case Goond Ram's deceased adoptive daughter's children have been staying with his *chulah* since their mother's death, although their father is alive and resident in another village.

The *matamal* is, in fact, a second home for the Pandit, although he is not a member of it in any jural or ritual sense. Infants go to stay with their matrikin whenever their mother goes there. Children sometimes accompany their mother, and on other occasions visit the *matamal* on their own. If a child's *matamal* is in the same village as his own, he may go there several times a week, and sometimes even several times in a day. His best playmates may be his cousins related to him through his mother. But a child stays overnight with his *matamal* only when accompanied by his mother. If their

matrikin are in a village other than their own, the children of a household will go there infrequently, but when they go they usually stay for a week or so.

The Pandit children await visits to their *matamal* with considerable anticipation. Such visits afford them an opportunity to escape from the monotony of living with the same people, and playing with the same playmates every day. More important, while staying with their matrikin they are not subject to the sort of discipline they are used to at home. By contrast with daily life at home, visits to *matamal* are like vacations, when many restraints are removed and punishments for pranks are rare and mild. The Pandit grandparents, particularly the grandmother, are proverbially and actually indulgent towards their daughter's children. This attitude is not difficult to understand. Maternal grandparents are not placed in the same position in the Pandit family system as the paternal grandparents. The latter have the primary responsibility for instructing and disciplining children, and therefore have to be more strict with them. Not only do the maternal grandparents of a child generally make no serious attempt to discipline him, but if they do so, their attitude is often resented by the child's paternal grandparents who regard it as presumptuous interference.

Although the children of a daughter are as closely related to their mother's parents as the children of a son are to their father's parents, yet the daughter's children live apart from their maternal grandparents, removed from the latter's daily love and care, and do not inherit from their *matamal*. Since a woman's children spend only brief spells of time with their mother's natal home, such visits are characterized by an intensity of emotional expression on the part of their mother's parents and siblings which would not have been evoked, nor easily sustained at that high level, had the children in question been permanently resident with their *matamal*. The Pandits explain the indulgent attitude towards a daughter's children by saying that they are guests and should be so treated ; 'after all they will soon return to their home'.

A grandmother's discriminatively favourable treatment of her daughter's children, as against her son's children, if it occurs, is usually a reflection of the personal friendliness and attach-

ment which exists between mother and daughter. By contrast the relations of a Pandit mother-in-law and her son's wife are very often charged with tension and bitterness, and the relations between a son and his parents also may be strained. These tensions and strains may temporarily influence the conduct of a couple into indifference towards their son's children. Radha's relations with her daughter-in-law, Tol, were very unpleasant for several years after the latter's marriage. When Tol became a mother, Radha and her husband, particularly Radha, were rather indifferent towards their son's (and Tol's) children, and did not show much interest in them, as grandparents normally do, nor did they exercise much control over them. Although she denies it, Radha is more fond of her daughter's children, and discriminates against Tol's children, whenever the former are on a visit to their *matamal*. She takes greater notice of the pranks of Tol's children and is partial towards her daughter's children in the distribution of food and the expression of love.

In this connexion it is of interest to note that paternal grandparents do not favour frequent visits by their sons' children to their respective *matamal*. They complain that children get spoilt during such visits, and by the time they return home they usually become undisciplined. This often is true as the foregoing analysis would lead one to expect. Moreover, the strained relations between woman-giving and woman-receiving households also find expression in such complaints.

In the foregoing discussion I have emphasized the relations between children and their matrikin because it is with regard to *children* that the position of a *kotamb* as *matamal* is most important. As they grow up, the boys go to school and the girls are brought under stricter control and required to work at home. Consequently their relations with their *matamal* begin to diminish in terms of frequency, though not in intimacy of contacts.

After marriage, a person's spouse's natal *chulah* comes to occupy an important place in his or her life, often at the cost of loosening of bonds with the *matamal*. This is particularly true of a married woman, whose *variw* is her second home. The loosening of bonds between a man and his *matamal* is gradual. As he grows up, is married, and assumes various duties

and responsibilities of adult life, a Pandit finds himself engaging less and less in informal relations with his *matamal*. An important event in this process of the lessening of interaction, and one which hastens it, is the death of a person's mother. A Pandit's relationship with his matrikin is a mediated one, and after the mediating person (the mother) is dead, the tone and frequency of interaction suffer a definite change. The Pandits themselves emphasize that a person's *matamal* are his solicitous and helpful kin *because* they are the members of his mother's natal *kotamb*.

Spouse's 'Matamal'

For a Pandit woman, her husband's *matamal* is her *badavariw*, or the 'greater conjugal home'. She visits her *badavariw* for the first time a few weeks after her marriage. It is a formal occasion, and she carries with her gifts in cash and kind for her grandparents-in-law. At least during the year after her marriage, a woman's natal *chulah* sends gifts to her *badavariw* on occasions like birthdays. Similarly, a woman's own *matamal* sends gifts to her parents-in-law on her marriage, and all other important occasions in her life, like the birth of her first child and first son, the *mekhal* of her sons, and the marriage of her children. The gifts that a man's *matamal* receives from his wife's natal household and also the gifts which his natal *chulah* receives from her *matamal*, are a social recognition of the ties of sentiment and affection which exist between a person and his or her matrikin.

A man's relations with his wife's *matamal*, or the *badahowur* ('greater conjugal family') are very formal. He goes there only when invited, and he is invited there for the first time a few weeks after his marriage to attend a formal dinner in his honour. Thereafter he visits his *badahowur* rarely, and usually on occasions like marriages and deaths. When he goes to offer condolences, he goes uninvited and is treated like any other visitor, and not like an honoured guest, as on other happier occasions.

Mother's Siblings

The members of a household in their capacity as the *matamal*

of their grandchildren, or nephews and nieces, have special roles to play on certain ritual and ceremonial occasions in the lives of the latter. Prominent among these are the roles of *mas* (mother's sister) and *mam* (mother's brother) (see above, pp. 92f.). We may briefly recapitulate here that at the time of a boy's *mekhal,* it is his *mas* from whom he ceremonially begs money (as a part of the ritual) first of all. She also distributes milk and sweet cakes among all the persons present on the occasion. Through these usages is expressed the affection that is expected to exist between a woman on the one hand, and her sister and sister's children on the other. If a woman has several sisters, all of them give their nephew gifts of money, and may also distribute milk and cakes.

When a person has to beg, he is apt to begin with a person of whose help he is certain. By making the boy beg from his parents only after he has done so from his mother's sister, the *mas*-nephew relationship is, as it were, dramatized. This relationship is further thrown into relief by the roles assigned to the *pof* (father's sister) and her husband on this occasion, which are all authoritarian.

As in the relationship of *mas* and nephew, love and tenderness are also emphasized in the *mam*-nephew/niece relationship. On the occasion of his *mekhal,* the boy's *mam* carries him in his lap for his ritual bath, which is the last of the rites. This act not only emphasizes the affection that exists between the two ; it may also be seen as symbolizing the support that a man generally expects throughout his life from his *mam.* Similarly at the time of marriage, the *mam* of the bride and the bridegroom, act as personal advisers and attendants of the couple while the marriage rites are being performed. At the end of the marriage ritual, when the bridegroom's party make ready to return home, the bride is formally handed over to her husband's *mam,* who carries her away in his lap, just as her own *mam* earlier carries her to the place where the marriage is solemnized.

The *mam* is regarded as a friend with whom a person may deal on familiar terms, though there is no customary joking relationship. The Pandits do not attach as great an importance to generation differences as they do to age differences. Conse-

quently a *mam* and nephew who are not separated by more than a few years tend to be more familiar with one another than those who are separated by a greater number of years. In view of the Pandits' general attitude to relations between adult members of the two sexes, a woman is rarely so intimate with her mother's brother as a man is.

The *mam* has the privilege of having an active role to play in most of the affairs concerning his sister's children. Thus he is usually consulted before the marriages of his nephews and nieces are settled by their parents. His advice is sought though it may not always be accepted. We have earlier pointed out that a man is on more friendly terms with his wife's brother than with any other relative-in-law. We have also shown that sibling rivalry between brother and sister never becomes so pronounced as it does between brothers, and that brothers are customarily expected to be kind and courteous to their sisters. The *mam*-nephew/niece relationship is based on these relations between siblings and brothers-in-law.

There are many Pandit folktales, songs and sayings about the 'affectionate *mam*',[2] one of the stereotypes of Pandit kinship, which may be contrasted with the other stereotype of the *pitur*. The Pandits apply the term *mam* sarcastically to a man who tries to take an undue interest in the well-being and affairs of other people. The implication is two-fold: firstly that a *mam* is expected to take a great interest in the affairs of his niece and nephew, particularly the latter, and secondly that the kind of interest which a man may expect, solicit and welcome in his own affairs from his *mam* will be resented as interference if it comes from another person. In this connexion it is of interest to note that the only kin whom a Pandit may address by using terms of reference are *mas* and *mam*. This usage is associated with the expression of intimacy and friendliness. It is a liberty that one is permitted to take with one's mother's siblings and with them alone. Generally speaking, the use of terms of reference as terms of address is regarded by the Pandits as a breach of etiquette (see Appendix I).

[2] I heard a little boy of the village singing one day at the beginning of the winter, '*sheena pyato pyato ; mama yito yito*' (how I wish it would snow ; how I wish my *mam* would come).

The privileged position of the *mas* and the *mam* notwithstanding, the Pandits maintain that there is usually greater love between children and their maternal grandparents. The question then arises as to why there are no special roles for maternal grandparents in the various ritual and ceremonial occasions in the lives of their grandchildren. One reason may be that owing to the wide age difference, the grandparents of a person may not be alive when his *mekhal* and marriage take place. Again, a person is likely to have several *mas* and *mam*, so that if the eldest is dead another can take his or her place, but there is, of course, only one pair of maternal grandparents. Although maternal grandparents have no specific roles to play *vis-à-vis* their grandchildren, a daughter's son has several such obligatory roles in relation to the members of his *matamal*. One of the rites during the twelve days after a person's death may be performed by his or her daughter's son. A deceased person's daughter's son's presence is regarded as highly desirable when the bi-annual *shraddha* for him is being performed. A man is expected to pour daily ritual libations to his mother's deceased parents, brothers and brother's wives. He may also offer them *pinda* at centres of pilgrimage, or on various auspicious occasions.

'Wora-Matamal'

If a person's own mother is dead and his father has married again, or if his father had an earlier wife, now deceased, then he also has, besides his own *matamal*, a *wora* (step)-*matamal*—the natal family of his step-mother.

If a person's own mother is alive, he does not usually have any relations with, or attachment for, his *wora-matamal*. The presence of a step-mother may considerably loosen the ties between a person and his *matamal*, but they are never completely severed. This is particularly so if a person's mother's brother's wife also happens to be his father's sister (as a consequence of marriage by exchange). Rattan (14) visits his step-mother's natal home (which is in the village itself) oftener than his own deceased mother's natal home (which is also in the village), but when his mother's brother, who is also his father's sister's husband, went away from the village in the winter of

1956-57, he wrote to Rattan but not to his father. Similarly on the occasion of Rattan's ritual initiation it was his own *mas* and *mam*, and not the siblings of his step-mother, who were called upon to play the various customary roles. In exceptional cases, however, a man's relations with his first deceased wife's siblings may be so cordial, and/or his relations with his present wife's natal family may be so strained, that he calls upon the former to perform the ceremonial tasks. I was able to record only one such instance. The attitude of the natural *matamal* in this case was, as may be expected, one of extreme annoyance, and the opinion of the villagers was that it was exceptional to the extent of being aberrant.

Parental 'Matamal'

The importance of the parental *matamal* is not great in a Pandit's life in terms of interaction and mutual obligation. They are given verbal recognition, being called the *bada* ('greater' or 'older')-*matamal* in view of the importance which a person's parents' *matamal* have, or have had, in their lives. After a person's parents' death, hardly any interaction survives between him and his *bada-matamal*. Like the relationship with one's own *matamal*, a person's relationship with his parental *matamal* is a mediated one; it is also more remote and, therefore, interaction withers away after the death of the mediating kin. To adapt Mayer's terminology to our needs, the *bada-matamal* may be said to fall within the 'kinship area of recognition', and one's own *matamal* within the 'kinship area of co-operation' (see Mayer 1960, p. 4).

Non-agnatic Kinship

A Pandit distinguishes between three types of relatives: (*i*) agnates are subsumed under the *kol*, the *kotamb* and the *chulah*; (*ii*) the *howur* of a man and the *variw* of a woman are their personal affines; (*iii*) all the non-agnatic cognates are referred to as *ashnav*. *Ashnavi* (non-agnatic kinship) constitutes a 'kinship area' of secondary importance (as compared to the *kol* and the *kotamb*) in which a person acts on various occasions and for specified purposes. Among the *ashnav* one's closest ties are with the *matamal* and the families of pro-

creation of one's daughter, sister, mother's sister, and father's sister.

A striking characteristic of a Pandit's relations with non-agnatic kin is that it is broadly unaffected by his or her sex, and is sustained more by kinship sentiment, affection and interaction than by jural, economic and ritual factors. Hence there is considerable variation from case to case in the intensity of interaction between a person and his or her *ashnav*.

Genealogical position is irrelevant in the Pandits' eyes when they judge (as they do) the *ashnav* to be somehow 'lesser' kin than the agnates. In fact, there is no generic term for the latter ; there is no need for one. The emphasis upon agnation is thus most forcefully brought out.

If a person is neither of a Pandit's *kol, kotamb* or *chulah,* nor of his (or her) *howur* (or *variw*), nor indeed an *ashnav,* then what is he? *A stranger,* for in the Pandit scheme of life, kinship is (to adapt Firth's famous phrase) *the only genuine* 'rod on which one leans throughout life.'

II

Household and the Family Among the Pandits of Rural Kashmir : Concluding Review

I

A STUDY of the Pandits of rural Kashmir must reckon with the fact that the typical Kashmiri village is not culturally homogeneous ; both Muslims as well as Pandits live in it. Coresidence in the same village entails mutual intercourse between them. In several domains of social life the Pandits and the Muslims of a village have common interests, and act together in pursuance of common or complementary aims. Their relations are, however, mainly characterized by economic interdependence. The Pandits are more dependent upon the Muslims, than *vice versa,* as many of the essential services which the Muslims provide to the Pandits (see Table XIII) are available only from the former. Either the norms of caste ethics preclude the Pandits from engaging in an occupation (such as that of a barber, an oil presser, or a washerman) because it is polluting, or tradition links a calling (such as that of a blacksmith, a potter, or a weaver) with low status, so that the Pandits have customarily avoided it.

But in a discussion of Pandit kinship in rural Kashmir, the relations of the Pandits with the Muslims are not of any direct relevance. Not only are there differences of religion between them, but also of social organization and culture. The Pandits and the Muslims retain their separate identities by following their own customs and practices.[1] They do *not* intermarry, *nor*

[1] Thus, to give but two examples of the distinctiveness of Muslim usages: (*i*) Marriage among them is a social contract which cannot be legalized without the consent of the bride and the bridegroom, and such consent may be refused by a man or woman, albeit very rarely, in defiance of the wishes of their

TABLE XIII

ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PANDITS AND THE MUSLIMS

Pandits	*Muslims*
(*a*) Landowner	(*a*.1) Sharecropper (*a*.2) Hired labourer
(*b*) Wholesale trader who buys to sell	(*b*) Supplier of goods (butter, blankets etc.)
(*c*) Retailer (shopkeeper, grocer)	(*c*) Buyer of goods for consumption
(*d*) Buyer of goods and services	(*d*.1) Retailer Butcher Cotton carder Milkman Mill owner/miller Oil presser Tailor Hired labourer (*d*.2) Artisans: basket weaver, blanket weaver, blacksmith, cobbler, potter and rug maker (*d*.3) Village servants: barber, carpenter, builder, cattle tender, midwife, and washerman
(*e*) Mill owner	(*e*) Buyer of service
(*f*) *Hakeem* (physician)	(*f*) Patient
(*g*) Patient	(*g*) *Hakeem*
(*h*) Money lender	(*h*) Borrower
(*i*) Tutor	(*i*) Pupil
(*j*) Master	(*j*) Domestic servant

do they interdine. For our present purpose, the Muslims may, therefore, be treated as part of the external system, and their inclusion in our inquiry unnecessary.

II

APART FROM kin groupings, there are no formal social groups or associations among the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri and the other villages I visited. Many Pandits are members of political parties but these parties are organized on the state level, and in at least two cases they cut across religious barriers. The failure to maintain groups of any kind, other than kinship groups, is a social failing of which the Pandits themselves are keenly conscious. In summer 1955 several Pandits of the *pati* of Umanagri joined to form a hymn-singing group. Contributions were collected, a 'president', a 'treasurer', and a 'secretary' elected, and some musical instruments purchased. The group decided to meet once a week near the holy springs to recite scriptures and sing hymns and devotional songs. Within a few months it broke up, and when I arrived in the village early in 1957, the members of the group sometimes talked about it and blamed each other and the nonco-operative *mahant* for its break-up.

Lack of solidarity among the Pandits on the village level is correlated with territorial divisions (into two *pati*) and a tenuous class division. It seems to be a feature of rural life all over India that the Brahmans do not act as a group within the village, as lower castes usually do. Gough's comment on the Brahmans of Tanjore also holds for the Pandits of Kashmir: 'A . . . lack of solidarity and organized action among peers is

elders. Being a contract, a marital union can be terminated by divorce, although it is easier for a man to discard his wife than for a woman to obtain release from her husband. In the selection of spouses a wide choice is permitted, and even first cousins are permitted to marry each other. (*ii*) The emphasis upon agnation, so pronounced among the Pandits, is not a typical characteristic of the Muslim kinship system. In fact, close affinal ties are accorded greater social importance than distant kinship ties. The permissibility of marriage between kin may be seen as a social device to strengthen those bonds of kinship which may otherwise become weakened.

found in relationships between men of the wider community; for personal status is of such importance to Brahmans that in all contexts they find it difficult to act as co-equals in a group' (1956, p. 840).

The only significant groups found among the Pandits of Utrassu-Umanagri are, as already stated, based on kinship. Except in rare cases, when there are only a few patrilineally interrelated Pandit households in a hamlet or village, there are generally two or more patrilineal groupings of kin, some of whom may be related by ties of affinity or cognatic kinship. However, affinally related households or non-agnatic cognates do not constitute groups in the same sense (defined by joint ownership, common interests, and persistent daily intercourse) as groups of patrilineal kin. Thus, bonds of kinship divide the Pandits of a village into agnatic and non-agnatic kin. Moreover, kinship is associated with only 'parallel institutions', and there are no 'associative institutions' of any importance among them.

In the absence of other lasting social relationships, kinship provides most of the ideals of social conduct and is, therefore, of basic importance in the ordering of social organization. The Pandits themselves clearly recognize this when they say that the only important and lasting social relations are those between relatives. All other intercourse is based on self-interest, and varies as a person's evaluation of this self-interest changes.

Kinship among the Pandits does not, however, have a wide range of application. It has no politico-jural functions. Economic activity by males is becoming increasingly dissociated from kinship in so far as the Pandits are beginning to rely more on cash rather than agricultural income, and cash income is not usually earned in conjunction with one's kinsmen. On the contrary, the general presumption is that a man working in an office, or earning wages, will not be associating with his kin in pursuance of his duties. Kinship institutions 'as a mechanism of organizing social activities and co-ordinating social relations' (Fortes 1949a, p. 339) are of direct relevance only in a limited sector of Pandit social life, viz. the domain of domestic relations. Let us now examine Pandit kinship institutions in this domestic setting.

III

THE SMALLEST and most discrete kin group in the Pandit society is the *chulah,* or the household. It is also the functionally most important group. In the structure and functioning of the *chulah* the importance of the bond of agnation, and the 'patrilineal ideology', is clearly indicated. The *chulah* may vary in its composition from a nuclear to a paternal-extended, or fraternal-extended, family, depending upon the phase of development through which it is passing at any particular time. It is usually characterized by patrivirilocal residence, and is always a patronymic group based on patrilineal inheritance. The *patri potestas* is vested in a man, usually the oldest male member of the household.

As an economic unit the *chulah* is characterized by a division of labour based on differences of sex and age. The principal responsibility for providing the household with all the necessities of life rests with men. Women work at home, in the kitchen and the garden, cook and distribute food, rear children, and look after the upkeep of the house. As an estate-holding group, the household is a joint family, but only its natal male members enjoy permanent and vested coparcenary rights.

Associated with the *chulah* is a domestic cult. Daily and periodical worship is offered to gods; also daily and periodical oblations are offered to the male ancestors of the natal members of the *chulah* by the *paterfamilias,* who also offers oblations to his mother and the mothers of his male ancestors. Whereas a woman may, when not in her menstrual period, take part with her husband in the worship offered to gods, it is men who play the part of principals in the rites. Women are, in fact, explicitly prohibited from taking part in some of them.[2] So far as the ritual offerings of water and food to the manes are concerned, only ritually initiated males are entitled to make these.

[2] To take an example: in daily *puja* two gods of the Hindu trinity, viz. Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer, are worshipped. Vishnu is represented by the *shaligram* (black ammonite) and Shiva by the *lingam* (a phallus of stone or marble). Women are prohibited to worship the former and a mythological story is told of a chaste woman's curse on Vishnu because he had tried to lure her into infidelity. She lay the curse that if any woman should worship him, bad luck would befall her.

From the foregoing remarks, we may conclude that not only does agnation play an all-important part in the ordering of intra-*chulah* relations, women also occupy only a secondary position (in jural, economic and ritual terms) in the household. These two features of domestic life are, of course, closely correlated.

The position of a woman is subject to a major change in the course of her life in every descent system based on agnation. The Pandits treat female kin as agnates of a special kind with limited rights. Till her marriage a woman does not have the status of a ritual adult, just as a boy does not have it till his *mekhal*. But, whereas the Pandit boy becomes a ritual adult in his own natal family acquiring consequent rights and obligations as its member, a woman acquires that status only after her marriage and with relation to the members of her conjugal family. This important change in the ritual position of a woman also transfers her permanently into her husband's natal family. Marriage is a sacrament and, therefore, inviolable. There is no provision for divorce. Traditionally widows were not permitted to remarry, but there have been some instances of widow remarriage in recent years.

So far as the right of inheritance is concerned, a woman is treated as a coparcener till her marriage. If she marries patri-virilocally, as is most likely, she receives a marriage portion and dowry, but thereafter loses all coparcenary rights in her natal *chulah*. She, however, retains certain residual and contingent rights. Thus, she is entitled to receive prestations from her natal *chulah* all her life. A female agnate may also, in the exceptional circumstance of widowhood before motherhood, return to her conjugal home. Such a return does not entitle her to coparcenary rights in her natal estate, but only to maintenance. Again, the act of returning to her natal *chulah* does not sever such a woman's ritual and jural ties with her conjugal family. In other words, once a Pandit woman becomes a wife she cannot claim jural or ritual membership of her natal family (*i.e.*, in her capacity as a daughter or a sister) though she may become a resident member of it with certain limited economic rights. The influence which a woman may exert in the affairs of her natal family may not in every case reflect her jural and ritual

positions, but instead, ties of sentiment between her and her parents and siblings.

Even in her conjugal *chulah*, a woman enjoys only limited rights. The Pandits clearly distinguish between the wives and the natal members, male and female, of a household. We have mentioned earlier that one of the basic distinctions in the Pandit family system is between the *zamati* (natal members) and the *amati* (in-married members). The distinction between kinship and affinity is also strongly expressed in the basic Pandit rule of exogamy, viz. that ideally no consanguineous kin should ever intermarry, and that a man should under no circumstances take an agnate of his own as his spouse.

Although a woman enjoys a ritual status in her conjugal family which she does not have in her natal group, yet she has no coparcenary rights; her only economic right is that of maintenance. But the part which a woman plays in the affairs of her conjugal *chulah* usually exceeds what may be expected in view of her inferior jural position. The Pandit women exercise a marked personal influence over their husbands and the latter's actions and decisions. Moreover, they also acquire considerable influence and prestige as mothers. Devotion to one's mother, and respectfulness and obedience towards her, are among the basic moral axioms of Pandit kinship. By the stress which the Pandits lay on it, the personal relationship between mother and child is given special recognition.

Bilateral filiation in successive generations leads to the recognition of kinship with both a person's father's as well as his mother's kin, and this is what we find in the Pandit society. A person's *matamal* plays a considerable part in his life informally, as well as formally, on various ritual and ceremonial occasions.

However, it is only the bonds of marriage and agnation on the basis of which kin groups are recruited. As we have already pointed out, the *chulah* is the most important of these groups. The members of a *chulah* are also members of a wider, segmentary grouping of patrilineally related kinsmen and their wives called the *kotamb*, or the extended family.

Compared to the *chulah*, the *kotamb* is a functionally less important grouping. The *kotamb* as a whole, unless of a low

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order of segmentation, does not have common ownership rights, or ritual and economic obligations towards its individual members or outsiders. It is usually a segment within a *kotamb*, consisting of the households of brothers and sometimes also of closely related cousins, which has such rights and obligations. Most of them are of a residual kind in so far as they stem from partition at the *chulah* level having been incomplete. Some material possessions are indivisible and others may willingly not be divided. Similarly many rights and obligations continue to be held in common even after partition. As the genealogical relationship between the heads of the *chulahs* becomes remoter, their common interests become diffuse or extinguished. Nevertheless, coresidence in the same village holds the households of patrilineal kinsmen together, and their unity is expressed in such ritual notions as pollution (if one man is ritually polluted by a birth or death, then all his patrilineal kinsmen and their wives also are polluted) and in *shraddha* (ritual offerings of food to manes).

When a *kotamb* is dispersed in two or more villages, active interaction is usually limited to the households of brothers and first cousins. More distantly related kinsmen lose active contact with each other and regard themselves as belonging to the same *kol* rather than the same *kotamb*.

The *kol* is the widest exogamous category of patrilineal kin, and never emerges in action as a grouping. The *chulahs* of all or most *known* patrilineal kinsmen of the same *kol* may, however, be represented at a wedding or a funeral. Such an *ad hoc* gathering, recruited from the *kol*, is an 'organizational group'.[3] There are no politico-jural functions attached to the *kotamb* or the *kol*, and, as already stated, all the important economic and ritual activities within the domain of domestic life are centred in the *chulah*. Therefore, we conclude that, whereas patrilineal descent plays a very important part in the ordering of domestic relations in the Pandit society, it fails to give rise to

[3] Firth in writing of Western society has commented: 'The kin groups outside the elementary family are not structural but organizational groups. They are assemblages *ad hoc* from among the total kin of members of the elementary family that would normally come together in virtue of a special occasion such as Christmas, or personal occasion such as a wedding or funeral' (1956, p. 14).

wider descent groupings with important economic, ritual or politico-jural functions.

Many studies of patrilineal societies in other parts of the world, particularly Africa, have indicated that whereas kinship may be of primary importance in the ordering of interpersonal relations at the person-to-person level, the agnatic lineage emerges as the important grouping at the level of group-to-group relations defined in ritual and politico-jural terms. The wider groupings of patrilineal kin, viz. the lineages of various orders of segmentation, are of considerable importance outside the domain of domestic life. According to Fortes, 'The most important feature of unilineal descent groups in Africa . . . is their corporate organization'. He further writes, 'In societies of this type the lineage is not only a corporate unit in the legal or jural sense but is also the primary political association . . . or to put it in another way, all legal and political relations in the society take place in the context of the lineage system' (Fortes, 1953, pp. 25f.).

By contrast the *kotamb* and the *kol* do not have these characteristics, and consequently seem functionally much less significant when compared to the *chulah*. The politico-jural functions which might have been exercised by the *kotamb* and the *kol* are vested in the state. Ties of descent are of no direct relevance in such a political system. The modern state not only precludes descent groups from exercising these functions but has also encroached on the functions of the domestic family.

The *chulah* and the *kotamb* taken together constitute a complex institution, characterized by a web of interrelations—jural, ritual, economic, moral and affective—through and in which the Pandits live their domestic life. Considering the fact that public activity and public interests do not engage the interest of the typical Pandit in rual Kashmir, it is not surprising that a Pandit's interests should centre so exclusively around his own *kotamb* and, even more so, his household, as they do. The *chulah*, as a group, lives and functions for its members; and every Pandit lives and works for his or her *chulah*.

APPENDIX I

The Language of Kinship : (1) Kinship Terminology

KASHMIRI PANDITS, irrespective of where they live (whether in Srinagar, the towns, or the villages), use the same kinship terminology. In the discussion that follows an attempt will be made to examine briefly the extent to which terminological classification in the Pandit kinship system is consistent with the behaviour of relatives towards one another.[1]

Pandits distinguish clearly between terms of reference and address. The former are more in number, each term having an established denotation. The terms of address are fewer, and their application is partly determined by the usages peculiar to individual families.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ego's Own Generation

IN EGO'S generation, the most important kin are, of course, the siblings. There is no general term for siblings. *Boi* stands for Br and *beni* for Si. Both these terms are elementary (i.e. irreducible in their linguistic structure), and denotative.[2] Each term specifies the sex and generation of the person referred to as also his or her genealogical relationship with ego. Neither of the two terms is reciprocally used between siblings of opposite

[1] Cf. '. . . we can expect to find in the majority of human societies, a fairly close correlation between the terminological classification of kindred or relatives and the social classification. The former is revealed in kinship terminology, the latter in social usages of all kinds, not only in institutions such as clans or special forms of marriage, but specifically in the attitudes and behaviour of relatives to one another' (Radcliffe-Brown 1935, p. 531).

[2] The terms 'elementary', 'derivative' and 'descriptive' with reference to the linguistic structure of the terms, and the terms 'denotative' and 'classificatory' with respect to their range of application, are used here in the sense in which Murdock uses them (1949, pp. 98f.).

sex. Specification between kin in the same kinship category is made possible by using relative age as an index of identification. But neither of these terms specifies the speaker's sex. The clear terminological distinction between brother and sister is in consonance with the importance of patrilineal descent in the Pandit social system. Pandits distinguish *sakh* ('firm'), or natural siblings from *wora,* or step-siblings. Formerly ego's step-siblings would always be his agnates but recent widow remarriages have given rise to cases of uterine siblings who have different fathers.

Ego's wife is called *kolai* and husband *run.* BrWi is called *baikakin* and SiHu *bema.* The terms *baikakin* and *bema* are derived from *boi* and *beni* respectively.[3] No specific terms are used to designate other affines of ego's siblings with whom ego has no direct relationship.

The terms for cousins are again derivative ; *pitur-boi* (FaBrSo) and *piter-beni* (FaBrDa) being derived from *peter* (FaBr) ; *poftur-boi* (FaSiSo) and *pofter-beni* (FaSiDa) from *pof* (FaSi) ; *mamtur-boi* (MoBrSo) and *mamter-beni* (MoBrDa) from *mam* (MoBr) ; and *mastur-boi* (MoSiSo) and *master-beni* (MoSiDa) from *mas* (MoSi). All the terms are denotative. The terminological distinction between the four types of cousins is warranted by the socially distinct relations ego has with them.[4] The spouses of cousins are distinguished as cousins are, and designated by derivative terms like *pitur-bema* (FaBrDaHu) and *master-baikakin* (MoSiSoWi).

Derivative terms are used for second cousins also. Thus ego's FaFaBrSoSo is *pitur-pitur-boi* and FaFaSiSoSo is *poftur-pitur-boi.* A theoretically unlimited number of such derivative terms can be employed to designate even the most distant cousins, but in practice a Pandit resorts to stating the genealogical relationship when referring to kin who are more

[3] I have elsewhere distinguished between single and compound derivative terms, and analysed the principles underlying their derivation from elementary terms (see Madan 1963a, pp. 268-74).

[4] According to the types listed by Murdock (1949, pp. 224 and 238), the Pandit terminology for cousins is of the Sudanese type. He calls the type Sudanese because it 'mainly occurs in a band across central Africa. . .' (p. 238). It seems also to be widely distributed in northern India. See Karve 1953, *passim.*

distantly related to him than as second cousins. This is consistent with the fact that in practice there seldom is any sustained interaction between ego and his non-agnatic cousins separated from him by more than two *ter* (degrees of collaterality). But ego's relations with his agnatic cousins usually extend beyond second degree cousinship, particularly if they are living in the same village. A collective term *piter* (paternal cousins or collaterals) is used for all of ego's paternal cousins, but a similar term is not used for any of the other three types of cousins.

First Ascending Generation

Elementary, denotative terms are used to distinguish *mol* (Fa) from *peter* (FaBr) and *mam* (MoBr). Similarly *maj* (Mo) is distinguished from *mas* (MoSi) and *pof* (FaSi). Derivative, denotative terms are used to designate the spouses of ego's two uncles and two aunts. FaBrWi is called *pecheni*; MoBrWi, *mamin*; FaSiHu, *pofuv* and MoSiHu, *masuv*. The distinction between father's siblings and mother's siblings is consistent with the different roles they play in ego's life. Considering that relations of conflict often develop between ego and his FaBr, it is not surprising that Fa is distinguished from FaBr. Moreover, the term *peter,* for FaBr, also denotes collaterality. The Pandits use *wora* (step)-*maj* (mother) for FaWi, but *wora* (step)-*mol* (father) has not yet gained currency. In this case linguistic change is lagging behind social change. (Widow marriages have now been taking place sporadically for 20 years or so).

Second and Third Ascending Generations from Ego

Ego's FaFa and MoFa are both called *budbab,* a term meaning 'old' or 'big' father, and FaMo and MoMo are both designated by the elementary term *nani.* This is an instance of terminological classification which is not wholly consistent with social classification. However, the Pandits use specification as an index of identification in these cases: thus FaFa is called *garyuk* (of home) *budbab,* FaMo *garich* (of home) *nani,* MoFa *matamaluk* (of *matamal*) *budbab* and MoMo *matamalich* (of *matamal*) *nani.* The siblings of the two grandfathers and the two grandmothers are designated by two sets of derivative, classificatory terms. Thus FaFaBr and MoFaBr are both *petra-budbab.* Their

being grouped together is the consequence of the two sets of grandparents being grouped together. Considering that ego's jural and ritual relationship with his father's parents is quite distinct from his relationship with his mother's parents, one would have expected the two sets of grandparents to be terminologically distinguished. The fact that few *adults* get the chance of having significant relations with their two sets of grandparents for any appreciable length of time may explain why these sets are lumped together. By contrast, a couple's distinct obligations towards their sons' children and their daughters' children entail active behaviour on their behalf as soon as a grandchild is born.

Either great-grandfather is called *badabudbab* (great old father), and either great-grandmother *badanani* (great or old *nani*). As in the case of the siblings of grandparents, the siblings of great-grandparents are grouped together terminologically. The use of descriptive terms also is common. Beyond the third ascending generation from ego only descriptive terms are usually used.

First and Second Descending Generations from Ego

Children are collectively called *shuri*. A So is called *nechuv* by his parents, and a Da, *kur*. *Panin* (own) children are distinguished from *wora* (step)-children. The children of ego's siblings and cousins are terminologically distinguished by derivative terms which specify sex, generation and genealogical connexion. Ego's BrSo is *babther* ; BrDa, *bawza* ; SiSo, *benther* and SiDa, *benza*. Ego's FaBrSoSo is *pitur-babther,* and MoBrSoSo is *mamtur-babther*. Other nephews and nieces are likewise designated. Similarly the spouses of ego's own children and of the children of ego's siblings and cousins are terminologically distinguished. These distinctions are consistent with kinship usages ; thus, as we know, ego's relations with his brother's children are different from his relations with his sister's children. No specific terms are used for more distant nephews and nieces.

In the second generation below ego there are only four denotative terms: *putur* for SoSo, *puter* for SoDa, *zur* for DaSo and *zuri* for DaDa. The different kinds of personal relations which exist between a couple and their two sets of grand-

children, and the different rights and obligations the former have towards the latter are recognized in this terminological distinction. A Pandit takes little interest in the grandchildren of his or her siblings, and by the time his or her own grandchildren are married he or she is usually dead. There are no terms for any of these cognates or their spouses.

Ego's Affines

There are two sets of terms for personal affines, one for the affines of a male ego, and the other for the affines of a female ego. The only terms for affines which are common for a male and a female ego are *hihur* for HuFa/WiFa and *hash* for HuMo/WiMo, and all those terms for the siblings and parents of ego's parents-in-law which are derived from *hihur* and *hash*. This is not as might have been expected, because if, for example, *hahar* (WiBr) is distinguished from *druy* (HuBr), *sal* (WiSi) from *zam* (HuSi), and even *haharther* (WiBrSo) and *haharza* (WiBrDa) from *dyarther* (HuBrSo) and *dyarza* (HuBrDa), there is no reason why WiFa and WiMo should not be distinguished from HuFa and HuMo. The relations between a man and his parents-in-law are not identical to those between a woman and her parents-in-law. Derivative denotative terms also distinguish between the first and second cousins, and their spouses and children, of a male ego's wife or a female ego's husband.

Terms of Address

As has already been stated, Pandits make a distinction between terms of reference and address. The former are generally not used to address a person. For a speaker to exactly specify his relationship to the persons spoken to through a term of address, is regarded as a breach of etiquette. If it is not done deliberately it is regarded as indicative of bad manners ; if deliberate it may be intended as a complaint against neglect of duty, or as an insult, and taken as such by the 'addressee'. If a person addresses an unrelated person by a kinship term of reference, the purpose may be to express friendliness or to give offence. The best

examples are the terms of reference *boi* (Br), *beni* (Si), *hahar* (WiBr) and *hihur* (WiFa). To call an unrelated person *boi* or *beni* is the Pandits' customary way of expressing friendliness, goodwill and affection. But to persist in publicly calling a brother *boi* may only convey the speaker's feeling that the person addressed to is not behaving (*i.e.* is not doing his duty) as a brother. When Parma joined in a quarrel against his brother Mak, and I asked the latter why Parma had done so, Mak replied in the presence of several people including Parma, 'Is he not my brother?' The Pandits say that to address an unrelated person as *hihur* (or *hahar*) amounts to saying, 'I wish to violate your daughter (or sister)'. In the Pandits' estimation this is the worst type of abuse. It is maintained that to address a *hihur* as *hihur,* or a *hahar* as *hahar* amounts to insulting behaviour. However, it is a different matter to refer to one's *hihur* as *hihur* in polite conversation.

The only exceptions to the foregoing rule are the terms of reference *mam* (MoBr) and *mas* (MoSi), which are sometimes also used as terms of address, to convey the friendliness and affection that generally exists between ego and his mother's siblings. Nevertheless, it is by no means the general practice to address *mam* as *mam,* or *mas* as *mas.* Many Pandits regard it as unwarranted familiarity.

Pandits usually use terms conveying affection and/or respect as terms of address. They also use teknonymous names. The terms of address always recognize sex and age differences, but do not reflect generation differences or genealogical ties as terms of reference always do.

To illustrate: the most commonly used terms of address for ego's father are *lala, bab, kakh* and *tathya.* None of these terms is used to address a woman, nor usually a person younger than ego. But any of these terms may be used to address ego's elder Br, FaFa, FaBr, MoFa or WiFa. No term of address is used in an identical form to address more than one person in a household, and therefore there is no confusion as regards the particular person to whom it is applied. The manner in which the practice of each household is established may be illustrated by an example. When Nanda's first child was born, he was the only person younger than Nanda and Nanda's wife in the

family. The child was taught to call Nanda *bab*. In course of time two more sons and a daughter were born to Nanda's wife. They called their father *bab* and their eldest brother *bai-raja* ('brother-king'). When this eldest son of Nanda became a father, his children also called him *bai-raja,* and called their grandfather *bab*. Nanda's daughter's children also called him *bab* and addressed their mother's eldest brother as *bai-raja*.

Conclusion

THE FOREGOING examination of the Pandit kinship terminology shows that terminological classification is not consistent in every case with the social classification of kin. However, when the terms are taken together, as a system, two important features of the terminology emerge, which are not only consistent with the social classification of kin, but also reflect two important emphases in Pandit kinship and descent. These two features are:

(1) Ego's relatives of his own generation, and of the first ascending and the first descending generations, related to him through his father, and through his mother, are not only terminologically distinguished, but they are also, along with ego's two sets of grandparents and their siblings, given equal recognition within the limits of second degree cousinship (inclusive). This is consistent with the recognition of complementary filiation at the level of the nuclear (parental) family among the Pandits.

(2) Kin beyond second degree cousinship are given terminological recognition only in the case of patrilineally related collaterals, who are collectively called the *piter* (derived from *peter* for FaBr), irrespective of whether they are first degree or remoter cousins. The emphasis upon agnation, which is a marked characteristic of Pandit kinship, is reflected in this usage. The Pandit terminology is thus, by and large, consistent with the attitude and behaviour of kin to each other.

Table XIV

LIST OF ELEMENTARY TERMS

Generation	Term of reference	Referent
	Male or female ego	
Second ascending	*nani*	FaMo, MoMo
First ascending	*mol, bab*	Fa
	peter[a]	FaBr
	pof	FaSi
	maj, ded	Mo
	mam[b]	MoBr
Ego's	*boi*	Br
	beni	Si
First descending	*nechuv*[c]	So
	nosh	SoWi
	kur	Da
	zamatur[d]	DaHu
Second descending	*putur*	SoSo
	puter[e]	SoDa
	zur	DaSo
	zuri	DaDa

[a] This term is derived from Sanskrit *pitravya* which is related to *pitra* for Fa. Pandits do not use the latter term, though *peta* (cp. Hindi *pita*) is sometimes used.

[b] The opening phoneme *ma-* may be noted in the three terms *maj, mas,* and *mam*. The way Pandits pronounce them makes *ma-* sound different in *maj* from what it sounds in *mas* and *mam*. The spelling adopted here for Kashmiri words is not phonetic.

[c] This term is the Kashmiri form of Sanskrit *putra* for So. However, Sanskrit *putri* or *putrika* for Da does not seem to bear any resemblance to Kashmiri *kur* for Da.

[d] The Sanskrit origin of this is obvious, *jamata* or *jamatra* being the corresponding terms.

[e] The Sanskrit words for SoSo and SoDa are *pautra* and *pautri* respectively. Since *nechuv* and *kur* are the most widely used terms for So and Da respectively, *putur* and *puter* are here included in the list of elementary terms.

TABLE XIV—(*Contd.*)

LIST OF ELEMENTARY TERMS

Generation	*Term of Reference*	*Referent*
	PERSONAL AFFINES	
	Male or Female ego	
First ascending	*hihur*	WiFa, HuFa
	hash	WiMo, HuMo
Ego's	Male Ego	
	Kolai	Wi
	hahar	WiBr
	sal	WiSi
	Female Ego	
	run	Hu
	drui	HuBr
	zam	HuSi

APPENDIX II

The Language of Kinship : (2) Proverbs

In the course of fieldwork I was able to collect about eighty Kashmiri proverbs concerning various aspects of nature, society and human life. Kashmiris are much given to interposing proverbs and sayings into conversation, and regard them as an effective and attractive manner of embellishing speech. These proverbs are usually pithy, poetic, and unambiguous, though often metaphoric, utterances (see Madan 1963b, p. 93). Given below are 30 classified proverbs pertaining to the field of kinship. The reader who has already gone through this book will, I trust, find the selection of some interest. The translation is not completely literal.

I

Birth and Childhood

1. *Nosh pyayi athi ayi.* 'A daughter-in-law wins recognition (proves her worth) when she gives birth to a child.'

2. *Nechuv zena noor pyav maka-madinas, kur zena nun pyav Noordinas.* 'A son's birth made even Mecca-Medina radiant, a daughter's birth pained even Noordin.' Mecca and Medina are the famous places of Muslim pilgrimage. Noordin was a saint and mystic poet and is renowned all over Kashmir for his philosophic sayings. The purpose, it seems, is to stress that even a detached man is likely to be upset by the birth of a female child.

3. *Lair khyon shehjar, air khyon chok nar; nechuv zyon shubidar, kur zeni tabardar.* 'A cucumber cools but a plum sours the mouth; similarly a son's birth is a becoming and radiant event, but a daughter's birth is like the arrival of a

woodcutter.' Just as the woodcutter denudes a tree, a daughter's marriage deprives her parents of their savings.

4. *Navihond palan ponberi dashen tal, prani hond pashan baran tal.* 'The new wife's child is reared with a silver spoon in its mouth while the old (deceased) wife's child sorrows near the door.' The Pandits are very distrustful of step-mothers and resent the influence they wield over their husbands.

5. *Hunis neti kus, kur mangith rati kus.* 'Who shears a dog (for wool)? And who adopts a daughter?' In view of the emphasis upon agnatic kinship, the adoption of daughters is regarded as useless.

6. *Boi pyam baputh zam malyun am navane, buda vayren baman am bati baneyas yezmanbai.* 'My natal home has been revived by the birth of a son to my brother. Buds have appeared on old branches and I too will preside over ceremonies.'

7. *Goda zai ba ta maj ada zav bab, doh panshi dab log ada budbab.* 'First to be born were I and mother, and then was born father; a few days later, grandfather.' The child's growing awareness of the people around him is here given succinct expression.

II

Marriage

8. *Vari andar vani, anganas andar kani ta gamas andar sonya.* 'A flood in the kitchen-garden, a boulder in the yard, and one's son's or daughter's parents-in-law in the same village as one's own (are all equally annoying).'

9. *Doonis doon, na doon na hoon, tas chchu mal hyun.* 'A walnut for a walnut (in exchange); he who has no walnuts will not get even a (pariah) dog; so he must buy (a wife).' The reference is to reciprocal marriages and the purchase of a wife.

10. *Hivis hyuh nyamat, besum kayamat.* 'A well-matched spouse is a blessing; an ill-matched spouse, the doom.'

III

Interpersonal Relations Between Kin and Affines

11. *Halaluk ya haramuk, panani dambik nav reth.* 'Legitimate or illegitimate, nine months of one's own womb.' The intimacy of the mother-child bond, and its *raison d'être,* are stressed in this saying.

12. *Kori rach maj gayi khori rach nav, nani ros shur gav pani ros dani.* 'A mother without a daughter is an oarless boat; a child without his grandmother is like paddy without water.'

13. *Kur zena malis kenhti chchuna nafa, kur chchai maji hanz rafakar.* 'A daughter's birth avails a father naught, but she is her mother's relief.'

14. *Yami garich kur tai tami garich beni tai pof tai pofanani, tami pata kostani.* 'I began as a daughter, became a sister, an aunt (FaSi), a grandaunt (FaFaSi), and then—I was a stranger.' The importance of the closeness of kinship ties and the change of roles in a person's lifetime are stressed in this proverb. Among non-agnatic kin the Pandits regard only first and second cousins as relatives (marriage with whom is not permissible).

15. *Me dop noshehna anim orai, nechuv hyath chajim yorai.* 'I thought I had got myself a daughter-in-law; she has stolen my son.'

16. *Noshah anim posh zan, angan chanim mash zan, hai hai ayam ta layam ma, badyam ta kadyam ma.* 'I got a daughter-in-law who looked like a flower. She already seemed to me like a buffalo when she entered my compound. There she comes! there she comes!! Grow up she will and then turn me out.'

17. *Maj gay radpat, beni gay kachchavat, zanana gay bokavat.* 'The mother (one seeks) for protection, the sister for support, but it is the wife whom one loves.'

18. *Loktis kolai dulvani, badis kolai lalvani.* 'A young husband cares little (need care little) for his wife; the old one must.'

19. *Godnich zanana gay prazlvun shama, doyim zanana gay bagachi hi, treyim zanana gay nara josh magas, choorim zanana gay dragas zi.* 'The first wife is like a lamp alight to her husband (and keeps his passions aroused); the second is like the

hi flowers in the garden (which one admires from a distance); the third is like a firepot in the cold month of *mag* (a provider of comforts); and the fourth may even supplement the household income in times of need (go astray)'. Both these proverbs (Nos. 18 and 19) express disapproval of secondary marriages.

20. *Gara pyath zamtur bar pyath hun.* 'A man who lives with his wife's parents is like a pariah dog.'

21. *Bata manz tath tahar, ashnavan manz hahar.* 'The most liked among cooked rice dishes is *tahar* (rice cooked with turmeric, salt and *ghee*), and the best loved among one's affines is the wife's brother.'

22. *Garas manz son jan to zam na.* 'Better have a cowife living with you than your husband's sister.'

23. *Hash na zam tikas gam.* 'A woman without a mother-in-law and a sister-in-law is bound to be indisciplined.'

24. *Maj karan kuri kuri, kur karan rani rani.* 'The mother loves the daughter, the latter her husband.'

25. *Che kyoho mangyo malinyo, nari pan alvay variwyo.* 'What (more) shall I ask of you, O my natal home? What more shall I offer you, O my conjugal home?'

26. *Sata vuhur boi ta shetha varish beni.* 'Seven years' old brother and sixty years' old sister.' A man in his capacity as the representative of his parents must continue to give gifts to his sister after their death even if he is much younger than her.

27. *Sag bash baradare khord na bash.* 'Be a dog but not the younger brother.' The proverb is in Persian.

28. *Maji mam hai av, potra myon gav boi.* 'Mother, (my) maternal uncle has come. Son, he is my brother.' (1) The bonds of affection are closer between primary than secondary kin, and between agnates than between non-agnatic cognates. (2) People who are closely related also know each other more intimately —for better for worse.

29. *Sonta gurus potras, harda gurus katras, vanda gurus shatras.* 'The spring buttermilk for the son, the autumn buttermilk for the son-in-law, and the winter buttermilk for the foe.' Buttermilk is regarded as being of the best quality in autumn and likely to cause illness in winter. The Pandit woman is generally alleged to be partial to her daughter's husband.

30. *Pitur gav michir kond achna varai rozina, pitreni gay*

marcha-pipani nachna varai rozina. 'A (paternal) uncle or cousin is like a *michir* thorn and pierce the foot he must; his wife is like a top and dance (fly into outbursts of temper) she must.'

APPENDIX III

The 'Convoy' : A Note on Five Informants

CASAGRANDE writes: 'In the course of his work, as he sorts out individuals and his reactions to them, the anthropologist will inevitably form closer ties with some persons than with others. . . . One or a few individuals, by virtue of their special knowledge or skills, their authority or qualities of intellect and temperament, may become his particular mentors and close associates' (1960, p. xi).

I regard myself as fortunate in having been able to develop particularly intimate and friendly relations with five men in the village of Utrassu-Umanagri. As I have written in the Preface, they gave me liberally of their time and help and generously of their affection. But for them my fieldwork would have been a less rewarding undertaking and an even less enjoyable experience. It was of these men, and their help and devotion to me, that the *mahant* of the village said: 'They gave up their homes and wives and lost their night's sleep for his [i.e. my] sake'. He also nicknamed them the 'Convoy'[1] because they used to move about in the village together with me as often as their own work permitted.

SARWANAND PANDIT

OF THESE five men the most unusual person is Sarwanand Pandit. Born in *circa* 1906 in an aristocratic family of Umanagri, he was the only one of two sons to survive and grow up into adulthood. He was much pampered till his mother died and his father remarried. Thereafter, it seems, he withdrew into a shell. When his father died, Sarwanand was already in his late twenties but still unmarried ; he still is.

At present he is the head of a household consisting of himself, his step-mother, her son, and the latter's wife and daughter.

[1] The *mahant* is a literate man but does not know English. The word 'convoy' is, however, fairly widely used in Kashmir in the sense of a train of motor vehicles moving together.

He owns sufficient land to have never worked for a living. He studied at the village school for a few years when he was a boy, and later at a technical (art) school in Srinagar. He has been out of Kashmir only once when he went to Jammu.

When I took up residence in the village, and tried to explain to various persons the purpose of my visit, they all gave me the same advice: 'Sarwanand Pandit is the man for you.' I had to seek him, for he is a shy person. Finally, when I met him, I discovered that he is a born ethnographer. He has an irrepressible but healthy curiosity about social happenings in the village, and an amazingly prodigious memory. He one day surprised a fellow villager by showing greater knowledge of the latter's genealogy than the latter himself possessed.

He is a man of orthodox views and is well informed about the Sanskritic tradition. But he is most unorthodox in his appearance, being the only man of his age who does not wear any headgear, nor the traditional gown of the Pandits. He puts on a shirt and trousers in summer, and in winter also wraps himself in a blanket. I once heard him call himself the *kali kamliwala* (one with a black blanket, a renouncer). Possessed of a sense of humour, and yet a sad man, he feels that he has had a raw deal in his life.

I think I met my *rara avis* in him. I have quoted in this book more often from his statements than from anybody else's, with the possible exception of Bishambar Nath Koul.

Bishambar Nath Koul

Bishambar Nath Koul was born in *circa* 1908 in the village of Vernag. He was later adopted by his maternal uncle who belonged to Utrassu. Bishambar Nath received education at the village school and later in a school in the town of Anantnag. He was the third person in the village to obtain the School Leaving Certificate after ten years schooling, and can read, write and speak English. He is an inspector in the Excise Department (Government of Jammu and Kashmir), and has the responsibility of supervising and controlling the production of hemp and other narcotics in Utrassu-Umanagri and the surrounding villages.

He has visited many parts of the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the course of his official duties, and has also been outside Kashmir several times. He owns a battery-operated radio set, a time piece and a bicycle.

He lives contentedly in a house, built by him, along with his wife and four small children. He is not well informed about his own village, but is otherwise a very intelligent and witty person with a penchant for argument. He is the opposite type to Sarwanand Pandit in many ways, as will be clear if his views are compared with those of the latter.[2] But, like Sarwanand, he is a very friendly and curious man, though very cautious. In fact, his broader interests would make him excellent company in any situation. On various occasions he talked to me about such varied topics as Hindu philosophy and 'the peculiar situation in the British royal family where the wife is the ruler!'

Shambhu Nath Tikoo

Shambhu Nath Tikoo (born *circa* 1916) belongs to Srinagar but has been in Utrassu-Umanagri since 1954 as the Second Master of the village school. He is a graduate and a trained teacher. He lives in the rented portion of a house with his wife, three daughters and a son. There was hardly an evening in the course of my stay in Utrassu-Umanagri when he did not call on me. His comments on comparative customs and practices of the Pandits of Srinagar were of immense use to me in my work.

Vasadev Pandit

Vasadev Pandit (born *circa* 1925) is the son of a former landlord and trader of Umanagri. He is the head of a household consisting of himself, his widowed mother, wife, children, two younger brothers, and the wife and children of one of these brothers. He also holds the School Leaving Certificate and was a government employee for some years. At present he is a 'worker' of one of the political parties (DNC) in the Opposition. He is greatly in favour of changing many old customs and

[2] All statements by these two informants quoted in this book have been indexed under their names.

practices, and is a forward-looking person. He is an avid reader of Urdu fiction and is a suave man fond of good company. He paid us a rare compliment when he named his infant daughter after my wife.[3] His own wife is a charming and dignified lady; her natal family, in the village of Chchatargul, is well known.

Srikanth Pandit

The youngest of my friends was Srikanth Pandit (born *circa* 1927), also of Umanagri. The son of an astrologer, he himself believes in and practises astrology. He is a landowner, and his household consists of himself, his wife and their young daughter (see plate X). He is a conservative and religious-minded man, well versed in the Sanskritic tradition which he learnt from his father. An affectionate and informal man, Srikanth was always willing to put at my disposal whatever help or information I needed, and his home was always open to me. To these five men (see plate VI) I am grateful for their help and friendship.

[3] The village bard, Rama Joo Koul, was kind enough to compose two poems to commemorate my stay in the village.

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